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'Nucleus' Settlers Drive for Nablus

In what is regarded as a test of strength for future settlement inside Nablus, a group of 40 Jewish settlers from Elon Moreh settlement, calling themselves the 'Nablus nucleus,' forcefully occupied an Arab-owned hotel in the city for one night September 15.

Rabbi Moshe Levinger, a settler-leader in the Hebron district, led a group of settlers and occupied a hotel in Hebron in 1968 in a similar move during which they demanded that they be allowed to settle in the city. The Israeli government consequently authorised the construction of Kiryat Arba settlement.

The Nablus settlers, who booked hotel rooms in the name of a Japanese tour group, reserved seven rooms of the eight-room Arab Bension hotel in the heart of Nablus September 13. The hotel owner, Amin Salim Hindiyeh, said that a Japanese man came to his hotel and asked to rent the place for a group of Japanese tourists for one night. The Japanese man had earlier gone to the Filistine hotel, which specialises in wedding parties, and the owner, Kamal Khoury, accompanied him to the Arab Bension hotel. Hindiyeh said he was not used to renting rooms to foreigners but agreed to do so because they said they would stay for only one night. The Japanese man paid IS20,000 as a down payment.

Hindiyeh, who has been running the hotel for more than 40 years, said that he did not suspect the man was working on behalf of settlers. "If I thought that settlers might be behind it, I would have never rented one room to them," he asserted.

On Friday afternoon September 14 at about 5:30 pm heavily armed settlers — men, women and children — arrived and climbed the stairs to the hotel entrance. They brought sleeping bags and food with them. Ossama Hindiyeh, son of the hotel owner, said there was no way that they could have stopped them.

Israeli soldiers arrived shortly after the settlers, erected checkposts around the hotel and searched Arab residents who passed in front of the building. Soldiers also occupied rooftops throughout the settlers' 24-hour stay. The hotel owners said the soldiers came to guard the settlers and did not try to evict them by force. The military governor of Nablus, who came with the soldiers, assured the hotel owner that the settlers would stay for only one night.

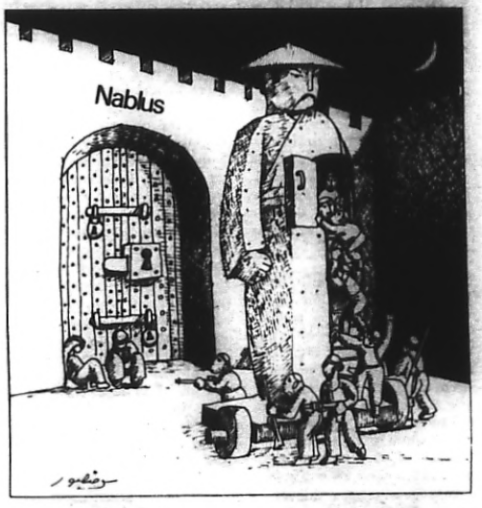
The Jerusalem Post quoted a spokesperson for the settler group as saying that the soldiers advised them not to go out into the city as tension was mounting on the eve of the Sabra and Shatila massacres.

The settlers spent the night reciting prayers in loud voices, with soldiers maintaining watch inside and outside the hotel.

The settlers left the hotel Saturday evening. "They came out at about 8:00 pm and left in their cars," Hindiyeh said. The settlers, who claimed that their stay was religiously motivated, had been planning the move for several months.

Palestinian hotel owners in Nablus said they do not rule out the possibility of settlers repeating the same action in the future. Kamal Khoury said he will not allow any foreigners to use his Filistine hotel. Amin Hindiyeh said he would allow foreigners to use his hotel only if ordered to do so by police.

Bani Katz, head of the settlement council in the Nablus area, said that the settlement attempt was a private initiative and was not sponsored by the settlement council. He added, however, that if the Israeli government takes a decision to settle in the city, he would be ready to help settler groups in doing so.



The settlers' only foothold in Nablus is the Islamic *waqf*-owned Joseph's Tomb site, a small building on the edge of the city, which they use as a religious school. Settlers took it over despite *waqf* protest. Settlers also claim that they have bought homes in Nablus but there has been no confirmation of this report.

The 'Nablus nucleus' settlers received cabled congratulations on their action from Knesset members Haim Drukman of the Morasha Movement and Geula Cohen of the Tehiya Party.

Sabra and Shatila martyrs were remembered this week all over Palestine and in Beirut refugee camps. A massive march in the Beirut camps is reported on page 2, West Bank and Gaza commemorations on page 3, and an analysis of the massacre aftermath two years later on page 16.

Press Service Warned of Closure

Israeli authorities issued two separate warnings September 17 against the *Palestine Press Service* (PPS) threatening to cancel the operating licenses of both the Arabic and English editions of *Al Awdeh* magazine on the pretext that both magazines are guided and financed by the Fatah organisation of the PLO.

Colonel Dani Bayer, the Israeli military attorney general of the central district, and Rafael Levy, commissioner of Jerusalem, sent notifications to the offices of PPS in regard to *Al Awdeh*'s Arabic and English licenses, both issued September 15, 1982. Bayer and Levi also sent a letter notifying owners of PPS that their magazine may be closed down according to Articles 94 (2) and 129 of the Emergency Defence Regulations issued under the British mandate in 1945.

A meeting was scheduled for October 1 at the office of the Jerusalem commissioner in which the PPS owners are expected to argue their case and oppose the military warnings.

In a communique issued by PPS owners Raymonda Tawil and Ibrahim Qara'in, the owners said: "While the new Knesset members speak of enacting liberal measures to ease the harsh conditions in the occupied territories, Israeli officials of East Jerusalem and the occupied territories are taking measures to silence any voice of the Palestinian population." The PPS called on concerned citizens, journalists, diplomats and politicians to protest this "unjust action" of Israeli officials.

Qara'in further detailed past harassments suffered by the PPS and its journalists. He told *Al Fajr* that the authorities stopped the publication of the daily newsletter in September 1982, have constantly conducted interrogation sessions with editors of the PPS, have placed town arrest orders against the editorial secretary of *Al Awdeh* magazine, have refused to allow the office to aquire a telex machine, have refused to register the office in the name of *Palestine Press Service* and have levied heavy censorship on press materials.

MK Mohammed Wattad from Mapam sent telegrammes to Shimon Peres, the new Israeli prime minister, and Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli defence minister, demanding an end to Israeli authorities' threats to close down the PPS office. Mohammed Miari and Matti Peled, from the Progressive List for Peace, sent similar telegrammes protesting the Israeli action.

The PPS is also amassing local and international support to pressure authorities not to close their offices.

In a silent demonstration in front of the Tel Aviv Israeli Press Office September 19, 50 demonstrators, including two members of Knesset, exhibited slogans in support of the *Palestine Press Office* and warning that Israeli journalists could be next.

The story was virtually absent from press reports, with only *Al Hamishmar* devoting a short news item to the demonstration.

continued on page 13

STOP PRESS:

Revenge Massacre in Lebanon

(See story page 2)

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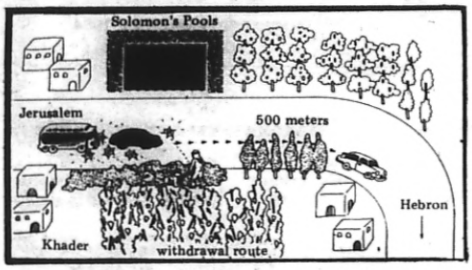
Bus Riddled With Bullets in Commando Attack



Five Israeli settlers, including one soldier, were wounded in a gun battle with Palestinian commandos near Bethlehem September 17. Two Palestinian residents from Hebron in the area at the time were also wounded. Israeli troops clamped a curfew on the Arab village of al-Khadr and Dheisheh refugee camp after the battle.

The attack, which coincided with the second anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacres, occurred on Monday night at 7:15 pm. An Israeli Egged bus carrying 55 settlers from Jerusalem to Kiryat Arba settlement near Hebron was ambushed near Solomon's Pools, three kilometres south of Bethlehem. The attackers, reportedly three people, hid in a grape orchard alongside the road and opened fire using *Kalashnikov* automatic rifles on the approaching bus, injuring the driver and four passengers. The bus, riddled with bullets, swerved to the side of the road but the wounded driver was able to keep it from going over the side. According to one of the wounded settlers interviewed on Israel Television, the attack lasted for five minutes. He said settlers were terrified by the gunfire and instantly ducked under seats on the floor. Some settlers, who were carrying guns, fired back randomly since, as one of the settlers said, they were unable to locate the source of the fire.

The two Arabs injured in the attack were driving a car in front of the bus and are believed to have been wounded by bullets fired by settlers from inside the bus. An Israeli police spokesperson told Israeli journalists that it was not clear whether the two Arabs were hit by fire from the bus or by the attackers.

Israeli troops arrived on the scene a quarter of an hour after the attack and transported the wounded to Hadassah and Sha'are Zedek hospitals in Jerusalem and the rest of the settlers to Kiryat Arba. The two wounded Arabs were sent to al-Hussein Hospital in Beit Jala, where they remain in satisfactory condition. Israeli chief of staff Moshe Levy later arrived to inspect the area and supervise the search conducted in the village of al-Khadr and in Dheisheh refugee camp.

Rabbi Moshe Levinger, a settler leader from Kiryat Arba, tried to block off the main road near Dheisheh refugee camp later that night but was persuaded by police not to do so. Israel Radio, in an English report September 18, quoted Geula Cohen, a Knesset member from the ultraright-wing Tehiya Party, as demanding the removal of Dheisheh refugee camp.

In reaction to Geula Cohen's comments, national figures and the camp's youth centre issued a statement describing Cohen's remarks as 'inciting.' The statement called on all peace-loving forces to express solidarity with the camp residents. The statement also warned that any attempt against the camp will be resisted by all residents.

Lebanese Languish in Israeli Prison

Four Lebanese women prisoners have been held at the Neve Tertza women's prison in Ramle since July, according to information disclosed by progressive Israeli lawyers September 10. Lawyer Felicia Langer has applied to the High Court of Justice for an order of *habeas corpus*.

Jerusalem lawyer Lea Tsemel received four letters, all dated August 26, from the four women asking her to visit them. The four — Fatmeh Mohammed Mousa al-Basha, from al-Khayyam village in the Marjayoun area; Raghda Abed al-Rida Mohammed Ayoub, from Kufr Tibnit in the Nabatiyeh area; and Widad Isma'il Mohammed Kharbeiti and Leila Ali Hussein Shawar, both from Tyre — explained the details of their arrest in their letters.

Ayoub, the mother of three, was arrested while on her way to Beirut June 9 for medical treatment. Al-Basha, the mother of five, was arrested two days later. Both were held at Mar Elias camp, near Sidon, until July 5 when they were transported to Neve Tertza. Details of Kharbeiti and Shawar's arrests are not known.

Last month attorney Jawad Boulos, from the office of lawyer Felicia Langer, was prevented from visiting the women. Felicia Langer and Nazareth lawyer Walid al-Fahoum had received letters asking them to represent the women in court. The women also asked that they be visited by the two lawyers. Israeli prison authorities refused to allow Boulos to visit them and asked him to have the visit approved first by the military prosecutor. He applied to the Israeli military prosecutor more than three weeks ago but has received no answer.

Langer recently petitioned the court to allow her to see the women and for the court to ensure their rights as civilians being held by an occupying power. According to the Geneva Convention, civilian incarceration from another country inside the occupying state is forbidden.

In a related story, the London-based *New Statesman* reported in its last issue that Israeli authorities had transferred 140 prisoners from Ansar detention camp in south Lebanon to Israeli prisons before the prisoner exchange agreement with the PLO last November. The magazine said that they are held in military prisons, including Atlit prison near Haifa. Furthermore, the magazine said that Israeli authorities refuse to give the names of these prisoners to concerned human rights organisations.

Mass March in Memory of Massacre

More than 10,000 residents, mostly Palestinian, of Beirut refugee camps demonstrated September 17 in commemoration of the second anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacres. The demonstration, the largest Palestinian march since the departure of PLO fighters from Beirut in 1982, took demonstrators into the main roads of Sabra and Shatila camps.

Factions of the Democratic Alliance — including the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Palestine Liberation Front, the Palestinian Communist Party and Fatah, headed by Yasir Arafat — called on residents of the refugee camps to demonstrate in remembrance of the anniversary. Lebanese security forces and Amal militia members provided protection for the demonstrators.

Marchers, holding high pictures of the martyred, black banners and Palestinian flags, were well aware of the prevailing political implications of the demonstration. Placards rajsed by the demonstrators affirmed the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and called on the need for PLO unity. They also expressed support for the Aden/Algiers agreement and their determination to continue the struggle in spite of all the massacres.

The demonstrators also called on Arab capitals to take their responsibilities seriously in supporting the Palestinian people and in helping them attain their objectives.

Marchers arrived at the mass graves by the southern entrance to Shatila refugee camp. On the way to the cemetery several hundred people joined the demonstrators. At the grave site several Lebanese and Palestinian figures delivered speeches including Shafiq al-Hout, head of the PLO offices in Beirut, Hussein Quwatli, director of the Lebanese Islamic Sunni House and Atef Al'oun, politbureau member of the Amal movement.

Massacre Ends Week of Violence in Lebanon

Just days after the second anniversary of the massacres at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon, another apparent 'revenge' massacre was reported September 20 by Israel Radio. Twelve persons were killed and 23 others injured in a massacre committed by the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) in the village of Sahmar, in the central sector of south Lebanon Thursday morning.

SLA militias broke into the village at 8:30 am and opened fire indiscriminately at local residents. Reporters believe the massacre was aimed at seeking revenge for an attack on SLA forces the night before by Lebanese resistance fighters near the village. Four SLA soldiers were killed and five others injured in the resistance attack September 19.

Israel Radio reported that the SLA forces placed Sahmar village under curfew following the massacre and the Israeli army began transferring the wounded to Israeli hospitals in north Palestine.

In several Lebanese resistance attacks against Israeli positions in south Lebanon this week, one Israeli soldier was taken prisoner and at least 13 others killed or injured.

Katyusha shells and automatic weapons were directed against a military position at the Batir al-Shouf crossing September 20. Ambulances were seen transferring wounded from the area.

On September 18 resistance fighters waged five attacks against Israeli military positions and positions belonging to the South Lebanon Army. Katyusha rockets were fired at an Israeli radar station on the Barouk mountain and at another military position located close to a television station. Katyusha rockets and automatic rifles were fired at a patrol belonging to Lahad's SLA. The patrol was travelling on the Gargou' road. Another Israeli patrol travelling near Tyre was attacked with hand grenades and automatic weapons. Israeli military sources admitted these two operations but denied any casualities.

40 Dead in Embassy 'Suicide' Attack

More than 40 people were killed and 60 others, including the American and British ambassadors to Lebanon, were wounded in a suicidal attack against the US Embassy in Beirut September 20. The Islamic *Jihad* group claimed responsibility for the attack. Israel Radio reported that bodies were still under the rubble.

The attack, the most serious since the re-unification of Beirut, occurred before noon on Thursday, when a loud explosion rocked east and west Beirut. *Monte Carlo Radio*, which reported the incident, said a car loaded with 150 kilogrammes of TNT and bearing diplomatic license plates was driven to the embassy compound located in Okar quarter, about 10 kilometres northeast of Beirut. The driver accelerated in the direction of the embassy after he entered a private street leading to the compound. The embassy guards opened fired at the car but could not stop it. The driver then drove the car into the wall of an adjacent building where the car exploded, destroying the six-floor compound. Describing the explosion, the *Monte Carlo Radio* correspondent in Beirut said that the building crumbled and smoke rose from it. Neighbouring buildings shook from the explosion.

Relief workers immediately began sifting through the rubble. By 2:00 pm, 18 bodies had been recovered, in addition to the 55 wounded. Among the wounded was US Ambassador to Lebanon Reginald Bartholemew, who received injuries to the head and chest. He is reported to be in intensive care. British Ambassador David Meyers, who was on a visit to the American ambassador, was also wounded in the explosion. The radio report quoted a spokesperson for the US State Department as saying that he was not aware of any American casualties in the blast.

Following the explosion an anonymous caller telephoned the *Agence France Presse* in Beirut and said that the Islamic *Jihad* group claimed responsibility. The caller said his organisation would continue attacks against American targets until all Americans left Lebanon.

Lebanese Prime Minister Rashid Karameh condemned the attack, *Monte Carlo Radio* reported, and said that his government does not approve of such actions. The radio station also said that Walid Jumblatt, head of the Progressive Socialist Party, also condemned the attack.

The US Embassy building in west Beirut was destroyed in a similar explosion in April 1983, when 63 people were killed.

CENSORSHIP

Following is a breakdown of censorship for issue 228:

Number of articles submitted to censor 11
Number of articles totally censored 3
Number of articles partially censored 1
Number of articles passed 7

Women's Groups Protest Jnaid Prison Conditions

Siham Barghouti/MN

In the wake of increasing pressure on Palestinian political prisoners in the new Jnaid prison near Nablus, women's organisations in the occupied territories held a conference September 14 in Beit Hanina to rally support for the prisoners. Conditions in the prison, according to prisoners' relatives and lawyers who have visited the prison, are so bad that prisoners are on the verge of explosive action. *Al Fajr* has reported in recent weeks about poor conditions inside Jnaid, such as guards teargassing prisoners in their cells, severe overcrowding, worm-infested food and generally poor health conditions.

More than 150 women activists and relatives of political prisoners, in addition to some representatives of local national institutions, packed the ground floor hall in the Professional Unions compound in Beit Hanina, a suburb of Jerusalem, in order to hear about conditions inside the prison. Under the slogan "Long Live the PLO, the Only Legitimate Representative of the Palestinian People Wherever They Are," the conference began at 2:30 pm with a moment of silence in memory of Palestinian martyrs who have fallen while struggling for Palestinian rights.

The moment of tribute was followed by a speech from the conference organisers read by Siham Barghouthi, who was recently released from prison after completing a two-and-a-half-year sentence on political charges. Barghouthi, one of the founders of the Women's Work Committee, began by pointing out that the conference comes at the end of a series of protest activities organised by local women's committees in Jerusalem and Nablus in protest of prevailing conditions in Jnaid prison. She explained that prison authorities are trying to deprive the prisoners of the minor achievements they have obtained through long struggle over the 17 years of occupation.

Mohammed Hussein Zahran, a former political prisoner who was recently released from Jnaid prison, affirmed Langer's statement adding that the intention of the Israeli authorities is to kill any nationalist feeling among prisoners. Zahran, who completed three prison terms, spoke in detail about the historical struggle of Palestinian prisoners to improve the conditions they live under. The first stage, he said, came between 1967 and 1970 when prisoners lived under slave-like conditions. During this period, prisoners were barred from even talking to each other or moving from their places without permission of the Israeli guards. Should anyone move without permission, he was subject to severe punishment in the form of beatings, solitary confinement or both.

The second stage began in 1970 with the famous 61-day hunger strike by prisoners. It was during this strike that the first martyr, Abu al-Fahm, died. Israeli authorities tried to break the strike by various means, including shuffling the prisoners to other prisons and bringing in others but the strike continued and the prisoners succeeded in getting the authorities to cancel these restrictions. Prisoners are in the midst of the third stage, he said, in which prisoners are fighting for further improvements in food quality and quantity and for the right to have books, magazines and other necessary items. Zahran further pointed out that the opening of Jnaid prison is part of a new Israeli policy which aims at returning political prisoners to the former days of slavery.

At the conference, a woman activist read a letter from Palestinian political prisoners in the desert prison of Nafha which said that prisoners value the role of the public in giving moral support to prisoners. The letter, written jointly by the Nafha inmates, described Jnaid prison as a Nazi concentration camp. "The only modern things in the prison are the surveillance devices and equipment which were installed around the prison," the letter said. It went on to say, "Conditions inside can be described in one word: deprivation."

Conference organisers received several letters of solidarity from various national institutions such as trade unions, youth movements, student groups and professional unions. A message of solidarity was also delivered by Na'elah Khouri, on behalf of the Democratic Women's Movement in Israel, who asserted the role of public mobilisation in defeating aggression.

Before closing, the three women's committees which organised the conference — the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees, the Union of Palestinian Working Women's Committees and the Women's Work Committee — issued a joint statement describing conditions in Jnaid prison and affirming the need to fight against them. The statement said, "The Israeli policy against Palestinian prisoners is a continuation of the general stance against our people which aims at harassment everywhere in order to make them leave."

Ramallah Village Loses Land to Confiscation

The Israeli military authorities confiscated more than 1300 dunums of land September 18 belonging to more than 30 families from the village of Mazra al-Qibliyeh. The land is expected to be used for the purpose of expanding settlement in the area.

Three officials from the Israeli military governorate in Ramallah, including the Custodian of Absentee Property, arrived in the village Tuesday morning and handed the *mukhtars* an order declaring the land government property. *Mukhtar* Mohammed al-Haj Suleiman told *Al Fajr* that he and the other two *mukhtars*, Abed al-Latif *Sheikh* Yusef, and al-Abed Huda Samhan, refused to sign the order because they were afraid their signatures would be taken as approval of the confiscation. The officers refused to go out on the land in order to point out the confiscated areas to the *mukhtars*. Instead they said the targeted areas had been surveyed and marked in red.

The confiscated land, according to village residents, is located west of the village. Ali, one village resident, said that portions of the land are planted with olive, fig and grape trees, while the rest of it is used to grow grain. The land forms one continuous stretch with other land from the village of al-Janiyeh which was recently confiscated on similar pretexts. Israelis have established a settlement on Mount Maidarus, located between the villages of Ain Qinya, al-Janiyeh and Ain Arik.

Landowners are reportedly preparing land deeds in order to fight the confiscation order in court. Landowners say they do not possess official registration papers and titles to the land because the land registration process which the Jordanian government was carrying out was stopped by the Israeli occupation. The owners said they would try to obtain records of property tax payments.

Authorities earlier confiscated more than 1300 dunums from the village one year ago. No work has yet been done on that land.

Sabra and Shatila Remembered Locally

Palestinians in the occupied territories commemorated the second anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacres, which fell on September 17, with protest demonstrations, rallies and memorials. Despite heavy use of tear gas and some live ammunition in the refugee camps, the day passed without casualties.

The most violent protests occurred in Dheisheh and Kalandia refugee camps near Bethlehem and Ramallah. In Dheisheh refugee camp, Palestinian youths stoned Israeli traffic passing in front of the camp. Camp residents said that at least 15 cars, mostly military vehicles, had their windshields broken and two soldiers were injured as a result. Israeli military sources, however, said that seven cars, including the car of the Hebron area police commander, had their windshields broken. Israeli troops which had reinforced patrols near the camp the night before besieged Dheisheh and showered the camp with tear gas canisters. They also fired bullets in order to disperse demonstrators. There were no casualties in the camp.

In Jalazon refugee camp, demonstrators set tyres afire on the main road in front of the camp and stoned Israeli traffic passing on that road. Windows of an Israeli Egged bus were broken from stone-throwing. Israeli troops later raided the camp and fired their guns in the demonstrators' direction as they chased them through small camp alleys.

Similar demonstrations occurred in Am'ari refugee camp outside Ramallah. Israeli soldiers were quick to disperse demonstrators.

At Bir Zeit University, the commemoration took a more organised form. Students held a conference in the cafeteria in which a number of speakers recalled the brutality of the massacres. Speakers representing various student blocs also asserted the importance of strengthening Palestinian national unity and urged strong adherence to the Aden/Algiers agreement. Students showed video films of the Sabra and Shatila massacres. Later they held a march around the campus and announced a one-day strike in memory of the massacres.

Israeli troops, which were rushed to Bir Zeit after hearing of the conference, erected checkposts around the campus and declared the area closed for one day. Student sources said that soldiers were avoiding direct contact with students.

Israeli troops placed Balata refugee camp outside Nablus under curfew September 17 following demonstrations and stone-throwing at Israeli military vehicles. The curfew lasted for two days before it was lifted on Wednesday evening, September 19.

Also on September 17 Palestinian youths raised a 20-metre square Palestinian flag on top of Mount Ebal, the highest mountain in the Nablus area.

In the Gaza Strip, demonstrations occurred in the central region refugee camps, particularly the camps of Nusseirat and Bureij, where demonstrators also stoned Israeli military vehicles. In Jabalya refugee camp, youths threw a Molotov cocktail at an Israeli patrol in the camp. Israeli troops immediately rounded up a number of passers-by.

Town Arrest Renewed

Israeli military authorities renewed the town arrest on al-Bireh municipal council member Dr Azmi Shu'aibi for the fourth time last week. Sources close to Dr Shu'aibi said that he refused to accept the town arrest order because of health conditions which require him to travel on a regular basis to Hadassah Hospital in West Jerusalem for treatment.

Shu'aibi had earlier applied, through his lawyer Abed Asali, to the Israeli authorities in order to give him a permit in order to travel abroad for medical treatment. The authorities, however, turned down the appeal.

Shu'aibi has been restricted from travelling outside the occupied territories since 1973.

The dentist was also arrested and held for more than one month in 1982, when he was questioned about his political activities.

IN BID FOR KNESSET SPEAKER

Labour Deals With PLP

An agreement was signed September 13 between the Progressive List for Peace (PLP) and the Labour Party in which the Labour Party agreed to cooperate on issues important to Palestinians inside Israel in exchange for PLP votes in support of Shlomo Hillel's bid for speaker of the Knesset.

The first part of the three-part agreement concerns introduction of new legislation by the PLP to eliminate the discriminatory regulations and practices imposed upon the Arab minority in Israel. These laws, comparable to *apartheid* laws in South Africa, are racist and allow for indiscriminate confiscation of Arab land, the denial of social welfare benefits to Arabs and the denial of key local or state-level positions to the Arab populace. The Labour Party has promised to cooperate with the PLP when they attempt to put forth legislation in the Knesset eliminating such laws and practices.

In the second part of the agreement Labour has agreed to approve a proposal to change the status of the Triangle village Um al-Fahm to the level of a township. Um al-Fahm has occupied the headlines recently for its resistance of attempts by the ultraright-wing Kach movement, led by Meir Kahane, to force their way into the Arab village in order to set up a centre for Arab emigration. The conversion of the status of this Palestinian village of 25,000 into a township would enable villagers to implement many necessary projects that were impossible in the past because of lack of funds and the multitude of bureaucratic restrictions. Township status would also give the population a larger share in the decision-making process in municipal affairs and would give the town a bigger budget

The final issue in the agreement maintains that "the Labour Party will consider favourably the establishment of an Arab university in Israel," according to MK Matti Peled of the PLP. MK Mohammed Miari, head of the PLP list, told *Al Fajr*, "There have been studies and plans made about the *status quo* of Arab education for a few years already and they were introduced to the proper governmental institutions which simply rejected them on the grounds that there were too many universities in Israel." Peled and Miari discount this claim. "They have established many Jewish religious and civil colleges since they refused our application," said Miari.

The agreement between Labour and PLP included a formal apology from Shlomo Hillel in which he stated his regret at his involvement in 1976 as minister of police in the killing of six people and the wounding of several others during 'Land Day' demonstrations March 31, 1976. Hillel reportedly ordered the police to use any means to disperse Arab demonstrators. His apology was a precondition set by the PLP before agreeing to the accords. Hillel said, "Those developments were tragic," and added that he "regrets them." MKs Miari and Peled considered the deal a 'victory' for Arabs inside Israel.

Public Services Crisis in Um al-Fahm

The village of Um al-Fahm with a population of 23,000 is suffering from a number of public services crises in the aftermath of MK Meir Kahane's attempt to enter the village August 29. Israeli authorities in various ministries have steadily refused in recent weeks to comply with demands of the Um al-Fahm municipal council to solve the pending crises in education, sewage and the budget.

Hashem Mahamid, head of the municipal council, told *Al Fajr*, "Israeli authorities believe that I bypassed my authority when I called for the general strike to encounter Kahane and his followers."

In the field of education, the secondary school in Um al-Fahm urgently needs five teachers in physics, mathematics, English, religion and sociology. The municipal council proposed the names of five teachers to be appointed by the Israeli ministry of education but the proposal was rejected and no reasons given. Mahamid believes the reason is "political." He said that since the teachers, all with good qualifications, are from well-known socialist universities, their work applications were rejected. Mahamid added that the Israeli ministry of education has not yet come up with an alternative plan and the school year is continuing without teachers.

In a related educational story, students in the elementary and preparatory levels are studying in 70 rented rooms with no toilets, lights or many basic necessities because of a severe shortage of school buildings.

Um al-Fahm is also in need of a comprehensive sewer system. Residents now use private holes dug in the ground. The municipal council presented a sewer plan to Israeli authorities in the regional sewer department but received no answer.

Negotiations between Israeli authorities and the municipal council over the municipal budget are presently underway. Israeli authorites agreed to pay IS450 million to the village but the municipal council has demanded IS1 billion to cover expenses, debts and annual salaries for the 200 employees in Um al-Fahm. Money is also needed for development projects.

In a selective arrest campaign conducted August 30, at least 45 people were arrested and accused of participating in the demonstration to keep Kahane out of the village. Twenty of the detainees were remanded for 10 to 14 days. All were released and await court hearings in October on charges of stone-throwing and participating in the demonstrations.

Volunteers Work on Kobar Land

In closing ceremonies for a volunteer work camp in the village of Kobar September 17 villagers and volunteers erected a stone memorial to commemorate the second anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacres. Muharram Barghouthi, co-chairperson of the Higher Committee of Voluntary Work in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, addressed the crowd of 100 and spoke not only about Sabra and Shatila but also about all the massacres committed against the Palestinian people.

Participants placed wreaths on the monument.

In the three-day work camp September 15 – 17 organised by two voluntary work committees in the village, 300 people worked at removing stones and thorns from 100 dunums of village land to make them ready for planting. Kobar residents have been preparing documents to prove their ownership of some 2000 dunums that Israeli authorities intend to expropriate under the pretext that the lands are not being used by farmers. During the last month, 12 persons have been summoned to the land registration department in Ramallah where they were told that they must present their papers showing land ownership. Residents of the village have been accustomed lately to seeing settlers and land surveyors marking off the land.

Memorial for martyrs of Sabra and Shattila massacares erected in Kobar

Barghouthi told *Al Fajr* that "most of the lands are planted with figs, olives and groves." He added that the residents of Kobar asked the voluntary work committees to prepare the uncultivated lands for fall cultivation.

Employees, Students Condemn Najah Closure

Employees and students of West Bank universities condemned the continued closure of Najah National University by the Israeli authorities as an expression of "enmity towards our people." Najah National University in Nablus, the largest higher educational institution in the occupied territories, was ordered closed for four months beginning July 30, after Israeli authorities raided a cultural exhibit organised by the students and confiscated items said to be 'inciting.'

In a press conference held at the American Colony Hotel in Jerusalem September 17, representatives of the employees' unions at Najah University, Bethlehem University, Bir Zeit University and the Polytechnic Institute in Hebron spoke about the Israeli authorities' systematic disruption of higher education in the occupied territories. The statement issued jointly by the employees' unions and student councils at the universities listed six measures which the authorities have frequently used in order to disrupt the academic functions of the universities. The most serious measure was issuing military orders, particularly Military Order 854, which aims at limiting academic freedom, and trying to force non-resident faculty to sign political statements. The statement, which was issued both in English and Arabic and read by Hanna Hallaq, head of the Bethlehem University Employees' Union, also listed the closure of universities for long periods, placing checkpoints at university entrances and colleges preventing students and faculty from entering, the detention or house arrest of students and faculty members and the halting of construction of new buildings at local universities and colleges.

Hallaq described the effects of the closure of Najah University on the academic performance of the institution. Among other things, the statement said that the graduation of 800 students has had to be delayed and the admission of about 1000 prospective students has been forestalled. The closure also delayed completion of the second semester.

In response to a question about whether the university was ready to negotiate an opening of Najah, Nabil Abu Znaid, representative of the Najah University Employees' Union, said that the closure was carried out in an arbitrary manner and that there is nothing to negotiate about. He explained that the authorities' entry into the campus was illegal and violated university regulations. Hanna Hallaq argued that the publications which the authorities confiscated from the Palestine Week Festival were taken on the pretext that they constituted a security risk. "Chemistry books, by Israeli standards, constitute a security threat because they contain methods of manufacturing bombs," he said.

Festival Closes Handicapped Exhibit

Seven hundred attended a festival September 14 at Princess Bassma Hospital commemorating the closure of an exhibit of handicrafts by the handicapped. National songs and *dabkeh* dances were part of the festival programme along with poetry readings in which some of the 100 handicapped persons present participated.

Abed Dandis, master of ceremonies, told the audience: "We have to create more humane conditions to support our handicapped. This is the duty of our national institutions and charitable societies."

A poem written by Nader Afouri, a former political prisoner handicapped as a result of torture during his 10 years in prison, was read by Awatef Said Asi. The poem spoke about the steadfastness of the prisoner who refuses to reveal information to interrogators.

Dandis told *Al Fajr* that the exhibition and festival netted JD1000 in profit which will be used for work with the handicapped at Princess Bassma Hospital.

The Palestinian handicapped displayed their crafts and artwork in the three-day exhibition held September 12 – 14 at the Princess Bassma Hospital for Handicapped Children on the Mount of Olives. The exhibition was sponsored by the *Muwazzafin* (Employees Club).

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Publisher:
Paul A. Ajlouny
Editor:
Hanna Siniora

Tel: (02) 281035
P.O. Box 19315
East Jerusalem

Telex no.s:
Jerusalem: 26467 omar il
Washington: 64677 omar uw

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IS NABLUS NEXT ON SETTLEMENT DRIVE?

Last Friday, 40 Jewish settlers spent the night and all day Saturday at a small Arab hotel in the heart of Nablus after a Japanese tourist booked rooms for them.

The action, though insignificant to some, has great overtones for the local Palestinian population who fear a repeat of settler actions in Hebron. The settlers who, entered the hotel equipped with arms and enough equipment to 'squat,' were finally convinced by the Israeli army to vacate the premises at the end of their Sabbath.

Small and insignificant as it seems, the settler stay is a source of great concern to Nablus residents and Palestinians if seen within the larger picture of past Jewish settlement of Arab cities.

The settlers who barged into the Arab Bension hotel call themselves the 'Nablus nucleus.' Their aim, therefore, coincides with the right-wing pseudo-religious mentality of settling all of *'Eretz* Israel.' Their name 'nucleus' indicates their intention to settle the heart of the Arab city and to be pioneers in a larger settlement scheme.

The stay in the Nablus hotel follows the takeover of the *waqf*-owned Tomb of Joseph near Balatta camp and other attempts to control the Christian-owned Jacob's Well site. A Roman Orthodox priest administering the premises was killed by a Jewish settler who confessed in court that the murder was triggered by his religious belief in the need to settle Nablus.

The one-night stay in the West Bank's largest city also brings back memories of similar maneouvres carried out in 1968. At that time a number of Jewish individuals posing as Swiss tourists checked into a Hebron hotel and refused to leave until they were allowed to settle in Hebron. Led by Rabbi Moshe Levinger, the squatters left the hotel after receiving a written commitment for settling Hebron. Today Kiryat Arba settlement houses thousands of settlers and more than 300 settlers have moved into downtown Hebron.

The similarities between these two 'hotel' incidents are too many for comfort. The settlers' actions regarding their aims to settle downtown Nablus speak louder than words. For our part, we are voicing our strong condemnation of the settlers' action and future plans because Palestinian resistance to both settlers and occupiers will continue unabated until both groups permanently leave.

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CANDIDATES KISS ISRAEL'S CHEEK IN BNAI BRITH SPEECHES

by Ghassan Bishara
Our Washington, DC Correspondent

Both major candidates for the American presidency, incumbent Ronald Reagan and challenger Walter Mondale, engaged in a bit of electioneering propoganda in Washington September 6 in separate speeches to the American Jewish community. Following the election year tradition of their predecessors, both candidates attempted to outdo one another in promising more 'goodies' for Israel to members of Bnai Brith, the largest and oldest organisation of American Jewry.

Such election year speeches are to be expected, and ones particularly centered around the Jewish vote are known for their lavish promises of even bigger and better presents in the coming year. This year is no different. The two candidates, each knowingly addressing the same audience on the same day and therefore guaranteeing themselves a spot on the network's evening news, attempted to sell their product in exchange for the highly sought-after Jewish vote — and at the expense of both the American treasury and Arab-American relations.

President Reagan, in a speech full of reference to the common values and aspirations that bind America and Israel, promised to continue protecting Israel, particularly at the Union Nations where a "forum for the defamation of Israel" has been created. Reagan quoted Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir as saying that relations between America and Israel have never been better.

Reagan criticised former President Jimmy Carter and then Vice-President Walter Mondale for weakening Israel by not standing firmly by her side. "We who are friends of Israel may differ over tactics," said Reagan, "but our goal remains always unchanged: permanent security of the people of that brave state. In this great enterprise, the US and Israel stand forever together."

In a direct attack on the Palestinian aspirations which he claims, in other speeches, to support Reagan denounced any hope of an independent Palestinian state and affirmed that the positions outlined in his 1982 Middle East peace plan "included our firm opposition to the formation of any independent Palestinian state." He added: "Today, those positions remain fully valid and they represent the foundation of our continuing labours."

In further outlining his administration's "continuing labours," Reagan stressed three areas where he said "concrete" progress has been made in American-Israeli relations. "For the first time in history," he said, "under our administration, the US and Israel have agreed on a formal strategic relationship."

Reagan confirmed the renewal of an American-Israeli memorandum allowing for "military research and development, procurement and logistics." He revealed that the US has "already purchased Israeli manufactured radios and remote-controlled vehicles, anti-tank weapons and components for sophisticated aircraft." In addition, the US is making available to Israel the latest aircraft technology for the development of the Lavi fighter, the Saar and the missile attack boat in an exchange designed "to counter the Soviet threat to our mutual interests in the Middle East." Reagan made no mention of his administration's 'strategic' co-operation with Israel in its 1982 invasion of Lebanon or of the failure of US and Israeli policy there.

Secondly, "We have markedly increased our economic assistance to Israel," said Reagan, pointing to the US$9.5 billion America provided Israel under his administration. This year the American present to Israel includes US$2.6 billion in grants, not loans.

Thirdly, Reagan mentioned the ongoing negotiations for a full trade agreement between the two countries. Reagan said the agreement would "enable that vital economic partnership" between the US and Israel "to grow even more quickly in years to come." He did not mention how this 'vital' partnership with a country whose inflation rate is 400 percent will affect an American economy which some still see as in the throes of a recession.

Mondale opened his remarks before the American Jewish community with a condemnation of Reagan's controversial comments in Dallas blurring the traditional separation of church and state. Any change in this American tradition tends to become a major issue in the Jewish community, despite their support of an all-Jewish Israeli state.

Mondale, in an attempt to affirm his tolerant stance, declared: "All my life, I have fought anti-Semitism. All intolerance is ugly, whether it wears the sheets of Ku Klux Klan or spreads the slurs of the 'Christian Voice.' All hatred is poison, whether it comes from the mouth of Rabbi Kahane or the radio programme of Louis Farrakhan."

Reagan, seeking later to reassure the audience, said that America "is, and must remain, a nation of openness to people of all beliefs," including those who "chose no religion at all." He also attacked "intolerence, anti-Semitism or bigotry of any kind" although neither he nor Mondale mentioned the 'intolerant' acts of the Zionist government against Palestinians both inside the 'green line' and in the occupied territories.

Mondale further lashed out at members of America's politically active Christian right, all supporters of Reagan. "It is troubling," he said, "that Reverend Jimmy Swaggart, who insists that Catholicism is a 'false religion' and that Jews are damned to go to hell, is a welcome policy adviser at the White House." He then scoffed at Jerry Falwell, the fundamentalist Amercian minister who is ironically counted as one of Israel's strongest Christian supporters, for his reference to President Reagan in a benediction delivered at the Republican convention as "God's instrument for rebuilding America."

Both candidates were warmly received by the 1200 Bnai Brith delegates at the Sheraton Washington Hotel. Neither candidate is expected to address an equivalent organisation of American Arab voters during the campaign. Walter Mondale's recent rejection of a campaign contribution of US$5000 from a prominent Arab-American organisation and President Reagan's consistent policy of military intervention in the Middle East rather than recognition of the rights of the indigenous Arab population to self-determination make neither candidate a desirable speaker for any future gathering of Arab Americans.

AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request.

RACISM INHERENT IN ZIONISM

by Michal Schwartz/Derech HaNitzotz

In 1975 the United Nations determined that Zionism is a form of racism and condemned it in the same breath with South Africa. The Israelis were shocked. Haim Herzog, then the Israeli representative to the UN, demonstratively tore up the resolution, thus expressing his opinion of the international community of nations. Israel, whose establishment was granted legitimacy from that same organisation, deplored the changes it had undergone since a multitude of nations joined it whose opinions were estimated by Israel as unworthy.

Nine years later, when the election campaign for the 11th Knesset drew to a close, it became a public fact that racism is inherent in the Zionist movement. Rabbi Meir Kahane didn't reach power by a military coup but by leaning on the most respected institution in Israel, the Supreme Court of Justice. The man who preaches expelling Arabs enjoys parliamentary immunity by law.

Kahane: Expression of a Crisis

The election of Meir Kahane to the Knesset, the most outstanding event of the last election campaign, is an expression of the failure of Zionism and the state of Israel in every arena. A state that undertook to become a refuge of peace to a persecuted people has turned into a society that lives by the sword. Militarism, occupation and preparations for the next war are imprinted into the young generations and conceived as naturally as income tax and house mortgage.

Economically, a state that had pretensions to 'turn the pyramid from its point to its base' and return the Jews to productive labour and to the land while building an independent economy became in fact a parasitic society that is maintained by American money, conquests and super exploitation of Arab labour. It drains its energies on an insatiable security budget, which leads to rising social tensions.

In the arena of 'the ingathering of the exiles' and the building of an 'egalitarian n and united national society,' Israel is divided today into two communities separated by a gulf of hatred, frustration and discrimination. In the Israel that educated its citizens to hate anything resembling Arab culture, Oriental Jews have become an uprooted community, strange to the *Ashkenazi* culture. They have distinguished themselves from *Ashkanazis* only by adopting open Arab hatred and clinging to the Jewish religion. The most embittered and discriminated against segments of the Oriental Jews have become the Jewish 'Phalange.' The more socio-economic crises hurt the weak, the more Kahanism will deepen its hold on them.

Labour's attempt to annihilate the Palestinian question by unilateral agreements with each Arab state, and especially with King Hussein, have failed. In light of Palestinian total rejection of the Camp David accords, Hussein declined to tie himself to the 'Jordanian option' and no serious partners to the plan in the West Bank could be found.

The attempt to 'solve' the Palestinian problem by military means was also proven unviable in the Lebanon war. Kahane expresses the last option left to the Zionists — expulsion. It isn't a new option, as we shall later see; it was brought up on various occasions by the Zionist movement during the last 50 years.

Kahanism: Degeneration of the Israeli Society

Whereas in Germany, fascism had to carve a bloody path of oppression in the healthy elements of the German people by building concentration camps where tens of thousands of Germans were to die with Jews, Israel is a rose garden for fascism, and its development in it grows naturally. It is nourished by a militarist ideology, by a history of occupations and expansions, by norms of discrimination and racism and in an atmosphere of inequality and deprivation that has become massive as unemployment and need are spreading.

The change from a party that spoke of socialism, equality, a cooperative economy and peace to the parliamentary overturn of 1977 and the rise of a party with obvious fascist ideological elements did not shake Israeli society. From that minute on, a quick process of erosion ensued that raised Tehiya, an openly racist and fascist party, to the level of the third biggest party after Labour and Likud, besides the Matzad and Kahane. Kahane's support is vital for the Likud. He could tip the scale in case Shamir ever heads a government again.

Looking into the social support of the fascist parties it is obvious they are far from a peripheral force:

a. They enjoy the support of big money, company directors, generals and members of the scientific and rural establishment.

b. Most of the religious establishment supports them and they have hordes of *ashkenazi petit bourgeois* youth, the 'knitted caps,' at their disposal — those who filled the settlements and the ranks of Gush Emunim.

c. Non-religious youth from every social strata and background, as can be seen from any poll conducted in schools and in the army, support them.

d. The most frustrated and hurt social layers in Jewish society, especially from among the Oriental Jews, support them.

Judaism and Racism

Right from the beginning, fascism, including Kahanism, enjoyed legitimacy from the fact of its being Jewish, Zionist and religious in a way that no other party that depends on the Arab vote has. Whereas so far religious parties have refrained from taking stands on political issues, foreign policy, the question of borders and the treatment of Palestinians living inside Israel, the appearance of Kahane signifies the growth of a legitimate politically fascist current inside the Jewish religion.

Only an insignificant portion rejected the Kahane-type Judaism. The overwhelming majority of the religious institutions silently supported it. In his article in *HaAretz* August 9, Yehoshafat Harkabi quotes some of the religious references to Kahane's claims: "There are in Judaism elements of discrimination and hostility against the Gentiles that were written as religious 'musts' and decrees. It is from them that Kahane draws his power more than from his supporters," he claims.

But the heart of the racial question in Judaism stems from the fact that it is not open to all who accept the principles of its faith but is inherited. Whereas Christianity and Islam are characterised by the multitude of peoples and races that have come under their influence, Judaism is characterised by the fact that you can't leave it or enter it by free will, as the case of Teresa Angelowitch demonstrated. [Angelowitch was a Rumanian who converted to Judaism and lived in Israel but whose body was dug up after burial in a Jewish cemetery because some Jews still considered her a Gentile.] It became a religion of a sect. Judaism divides the whole world into the Jews and the Gentiles, for whom different rules apply and with whom mixing is forbidden.

Zionism, Religion and Racism

From its beginning Zionism defined itself as a renaissance movement of secular nationalism. But the core of its claim on Palestine was the mystical, racialist faith that every Jew is a direct descendant of those Jews who inhabited the land thousands of years ago; their *kushan* (claim) on Palestine was the Bible.

The Bible in Ben Gurion's days became a substitute for history books and from it young Israelis got distorted ideas about the history of the Arab area and their own. Due to political reasons, Zionism adopted the distinction between Gentiles and Jews, based on the Jewish religion.

Whereas the revolutionary and democratic movements in Europe fought the anti-Semitic concept that the Jews are a separate race whose inherited qualities make it impossible for them to live among the nations, Zionism adoped these racist concepts as the *'raison d'etre'* of a Jewish state. In the teaching of history, anti-Semitic phenomena were stressed and separated from their contexts.

After the Israeli state was established, the traditional attitude towards the Gentiles was integrated with hatred of 'the Arab enemy' and led to the growth of chauvinism with strong racial elements that developed as wars and occupations became numerous. These led to the appearance of concepts as *'UN Shmum'* (Damn the UN), 'The whole world is against us' and 'A state under siege,' so that every criticism of official policy is interpreted as anti-Semitism and supplies further proof of Israeli righteousness. Begin's cry "*Goyim* are killing *Goyim* and Jews are to blame" when he heard of the Sabra and Shatila massacres will not be forgotten.

The historic alliance between secular Zionism and religious Judaism, whether Zionist or anti-Zionist, and the growing encroachment of religion in Israeli society are not the result of a tactical alliance or the blackmailing powers of the religious parties but a strategic alliance.

Harkabi says: "As long as the Jews were a minority in a Gentile area, they couldn't afford to take hostile stands to the *Goyim*. But once we had the power in our hands and we again became an active element in history, these elements in our tradition began blooming. Abroad, we wouldn't have dared to take out the body of a male or female Gentile who was buried in a Jewish cemetery... not so by the law in the Jewish state."

The Declaration of Independence and Deportation of Arabs

Those who lean on the Declaration of Independence in their fight against Kahanism are leaning on a broken straw. Since in determining 'a Jewish state' the concept of a Jewish majority is inherent, the Declaration of Independence itself supplies the justification for the expulsion of Arabs — a policy that runs through the history of Zionism. In *Koteret Rashit*, April 22, 1984, Tom Segev quotes from minutes of a discussion held by the Mapai leaders in 1937, including Ben Gurion, Tabenkin, Golda Meir and others, whose topic was the 'Transfer Policy.' The suggestion was rejected at that meeting, only to be carried out in the 1948 war by other means. As a result, some 750,000 people were turned into refugees and 375 Palestinian villages wiped off the face of the earth by bulldozers.

"There was never real disagreement in the movement that a state without Arabs would be preferable to a state with an Arab minority," wrote Tom Segev. "Due to the escape of the Arabs and their expulsion in the war of independence, a mass expulsion of the Arabs from Israel was not discussed openly anymore." But discussions of the 'demographic problem' never ceased. The 1967 war (Qalqilya) and the Lebanon war ('Push them Eastward' and 'Jordan is Palestine') put the issue on the agenda again, though not in the open. But a different relationship of forces prevented a repetition of the mass expulsion of 1948.

The Struggle Against Racism

Thirty thousand Jews and Arabs who rallied in Um al-Fahm in the biggest demonstration of its kind presented a massive demonstration of anti-fascist forces. The central pillar of this struggle is the Palestinian population whose youth are mobilised and determined to prevent a repetition of 1948.

The tremendous struggles of Palestinians on the West Bank and in Israel, especially since the mid-seventies, point at the changes that have taken place since 1948. The Palestinian people are organised and unified behind a devoted and fighting leadership, which gained wide recognition internationally and among the peace forces inside Israel. This is a people who learned the lessons of 1948 and are determined to hold fast to their land and fight for their rights. From Bir Zeit on the West Bank through the voluntary work camp in Nazareth or the Palestinian culture week in Taibeh, the Palestinian people affirm their identity, rely on themselves where the state fails and mobilise thousands of people again and again.

"Israel is a rose garden for fascism"

The road to anti-fascist struggle goes through forming a steady alliance of the democratic and peace forces in Israel with the national movement and insistence on the national rights of the Palestinian people, first and foremost the right to return, self-determination and the establishment of an independent state under its leadership, the PLO. (Translation: Derech HaNitzotz, September 1984)

Collective Building Answer to Housing Shortage

by Maher Abukhater

Are collective housing projects an answer to the housing problem in the West Bank? After several years experience in collective housing, many people would answer yes, but not without some reservations.

Housing cooperatives is one form of collective effort which decreases the high cost of building houses one-by-one.

In a formal cooperative, a group of 12 or more decide on a project of benefit to every member of the group. A cooperative must abide by certain rules in order to be classified as a non-profit organisation. No member can sell his share in the cooperative, for example in a housing project, without the approval of the elected cooperative committee. If a sale takes place, then no profit can be made from it.

The idea of housing cooperatives has been popular in the West Bank for many years. As its name tells you, Dahiyat al-Barid, a suburb nine kilometres north of Jerusalem, was built before 1967 as a cooperative to house postal employees. Dahiyat Jericho, a suburb of Jericho, was also built before 1967 as a winter resort cooperative. Residents, many of whom were wealthy members of the Jordanian parliament or royal family, have since abandoned or sold homes in the suburb after attempts to revitalise it failed. It now resembles a ghost town, following the looting and vandalism of the homes by Israeli soldiers who occupied it during the 1967 occupation of the West Bank. The area in the past has been used for military manoeuvres by the Israeli army.

In 1967 there were only four housing cooperatives in the West Bank. Members had to pool their own capital to begin. There was a halt on housing projects for several years due to the occupation until in the middle 1970s 30 professionals, businessmen and employees from the Ramallah district launched the 'Al-Bireh Housing Cooperative.' By 1982, Ramallah district alone had 25 housing projects which were either formal cooperatives or collective housing projects. The remaining West Bank cities had one or two such projects, or none.

New housing trends was one catalyst for the sudden boom in building housing projects in the West Bank, according to several members of cooperatives. "Young people now want to live alone rather than with their families, as was the case in the past," one member said. "Since young people cannot afford to build a house alone or even pay today's high rent demanded by many landlords in the cities, they find housing possibilities in cooperatives," he explained. The housing problem in the West Bank became tighter recently after Jordan put heavy restrictions on travel for West Bank Palestinians. The under-26 males were ordered to either join the Jordanian army or return to the West Bank. Many chose to return home.

Another important factor in the boom was money, particularly 'Steadfastness Fund' money set up in Jordan through contributions from several Arab countries. Residents of the occupied lands can get a maximum of 7000 Jordanian dinars (about US$17,500) each as an interest-free long-term loan to build a house. Obtaining this loan, however, is made easier if its applicants are a group planning a cooperative or collective housing.

Allocation of this money prompted criticism as well as praise from several beneficiaries. Critics complained that the JD7000 per family was not enough to even build the skeleton of a single apartment in the project, much less pay for land and infrastructure. They said that the first step in starting a housing project is to find an affordable plot of land big enough to build several houses on, if the plan calls for building individual units rather than a single apartment building. Such land can only be found in the outskirts of the city where roads need to be opened and water, electricity and telephone lines extended. By the time all these are done, a good percentage of the loan is spent. The rest of the money is used to start the actual building but runs out before the skeleton is finished.

The critics argued that most of those lured by the loan are on limited income. When the loan runs out, they find themselves unable to finish even the structure of the building, let alone the house interior. As a result they stop building, continue to pay rent for the apartment they live in and, three years after they were granted the loan, must begin monthly payments of about JD40.

The critics said that some people must pay additional debt if they borrowed money to pay for their initial share in the lot.

"Because of these unforeseen problems," one critic said, "some of the buildings or even the whole project are abandoned for some time until money or buyers are found." Since selling for profit in a cooperative is illegal and cannot be done without the approval of the cooperative committee, the owner may find a difficult time trying to get rid of his share in order to pay his debts.

Two solutions were offered to this problem. One, to increase the loan to a sum that would allow the borrower to build an average-size house. The other is to simply make the loan a grant so that the borrower will not have to worry about repaying it.

One committee chairperson suggested that the money borrowed from Jordan be used for two purposes: to allow housing companies to build apartments which people could then buy with a loan from Jordan. This way the project will be completed and the individual will be able to afford buying it at reasonable monthly rates and without having to be involved with builders and contractors.

The criticism that the JD7000 is not enough was rejected by some who have built collective housing projects. A member of a project for employees of the dismissed al-Bireh municipality said 14 municipal employees got together in 1980 and decided to build a 14-unit apartment building on a 1.25-dunum lot. He said the lot was big enough for the building and within city limits of al-Bireh so all public services — roads, electricity and water — were handy. He explained that since the project was only one building, this cut unnecessary costs considerably. Each apartment ended up finally costing between JD8000-10,000, depending on the interior. The project was praised by many as an "ideal and cost-efficient" housing project.

The JD7000 sum was decided on the assumption that a 70-square-metre apartment will cost JD100 for every square metre of construction. This area is large enough to have a two-room house with a kitchen and bathroom. The al-Bireh municipal employees' building, which so far is the most cost efficient and the only one which is completed, allowed 110 square metres for each apartment.

Some members of cooperatives said that if all housing projects for limited income groups follow the example of the al-Bireh municipal employees' project rather than build costly separate units, they would all be successful. However, joint housing is not yet popular among traditional society. Al-Bireh's project started with 26 members, some of whom wanted separate housing units, but the scarcity of money and land forced a one-building design for 14 members.

Some West Bankers were critical of the whole money-giving system. They charged that "money was given to a privileged number of people and the final decision as to who gets the loan lies in the hands of Jordanian intelligence." They accused Jordan of using the fund for political purposes, denying loans to those who oppose its policies and rewarding supporters. The Journalists' Association in the West Bank was denied a loan a year ago because it included on its list of applicants the names of journalists who are known to have a political line different from Jordan's.

Critics also said that much of the money goes to "individuals whose financial status is good and are not in need of the loan." Dr Samir Katbeh, himself in charge of a housing cooperative in the Ramallah area for 26 individual housing units under construction since 1981 on a 16-dunum lot, rejected the criticism. He said that even though some of the members in a housing cooperative have enough money to build a nice villa, the loan was needed to help them defray extra costs and construct a house that suits them. He added that many people worked for years and how have saved some money to build a house. It is therefore their right, he said, to build a nice house to live in after all these years of hard work.

In spite of the need of housing in the West Bank, the Israeli military has rejected many of the applications for housing cooperatives. Israel's restrictions stem from their concerted policy to thwart Arab construction and thereby empty Palestine of its Arab inhabitants.

The number of projects initiated has also dropped since the dismissal of national minicipalities in 1982. At the same time loans from Jordan stopped on the pretext that most of the Arab countries had not paid their dues to the special fund for the occupied lands. Recent applicants were told by the Jordanians that no money is available now for West Bank projects. Palestinians in the occupied territories point out that in the meantime Israeli settlements grow at an ever-faster rate over Palestinian land while Palestinians lack housing in their homeland.

Is Loan Enough to Build Single Home?

Al-Bireh municipal employees' joint housing project, the only one successfully completed because of its modest scale. Above: Larger and unfinished collectively built villas near Ramallah, under construction since 1981/MN photos

Israeli troops bulldozed three villages in '67 plan to 'grab Latrun.'

Perhaps They Were Never There

by Ehud Meltz and Michal Selah/Kol Ha'ir

Lutfi Hamad is playing make-believe. "This is my home. I'm pleased to have you as my guest. We don't stint when it comes to making our guests feel comfortable, unlike city folk." We are standing in the middle of what was once the village of Yalu and today is part of Canada Park. Hamad's house no longer exists. Neither does the old folks home across the road nor the mosque on the opposite hill. The village of Yalu and its two neighbouring villages — Imwas and Beit Nubah — ceased to exist in June 1967.

The three villages were once part of an area known as the Latrun enclave. Over 10,000 people lived here; they had mosques, schools, agricultural lands and centuries of history. But today there isn't a trace left. During the 1967 war the villages were wiped off the face of the earth. Today it's difficult to spot ruins and rubble. As for the inhabitants, those who did not go to live in Jordan are now living in the vicinity of Ramallah.

Latrun made its mark in Israel's short history as the site of one of the worst defeats suffered during the war of independence. Fierce battles were fought in this region over the control of the route to Jerusalem, but to no avail. The area remained in Jordanian hands until 1967. Basically, the border was quiet, save for one incident in October 1965, the so-called 'war of the tractors,' in which both sides sought to claim agricultural land in what, up to that time, had been considered no-man's-land. The members of Kibbutz Nachshon can still remember the days when they cooperated with the monks of the Latrun Monastery and, indirectly, with the villagers nearby. And yet, even then there was a plan — albeit under wraps — for straightening out the border and gaining control of the enclave. According to Meir Pe'il, it was a minimalist plan, calling for the conquest of the enclave and the destruction of the villages; however, the operation was limited to the enclave itself. Yitzhak Tischler, who during the 1967 war served as the intelligence officer of the fourth brigade (which operated in the area), affirms that there was a 'dovish' plan which was supposed to solve the area's problems. The 1967 war presented an opportunity for its realisation.

The order to cross the border came on the evening of the fifth of June after a day of mortar fire exchanges. The plan was to 'grab Latrun.' No one imagined that the fourth brigade would find itself on the banks of the Jordan River at the end of the war. The troops crossed the border late at night expecting heavy resistance but meeting only with sporadic sniper fire. By the time the sun came up they were surprised to find that they had captured the greater part of the region without any heavy fighting. On the morning of the sixth of June most of the troops left the enclave en route to Ramallah.

The three villages had not been touched by the battle but many villagers had begun to leave their homes the day before in response to the mortar fire exchanges. Arieh Yitzhaki, in his book *Latrun*, describes "the stream of civilian refugees with their animals and household wares." Yitzhak Tischler — who claims he was in the first armoured car — also remembers the stream of refugees on either side of the road making their way to the east.

The testimonies of the villagers themselves present a more complex picture. A former resident of Imwas, who prefers not to be named, remembers that on the morning of the sixth of June, Israeli soldiers entered the village and called on inhabitants to gather beside the house of the *mukhtar*. Everyone was then ordered to proceed along the Ramallah road towards Beit Sira. According to him, requests to take along articles or look for family relations were denied.

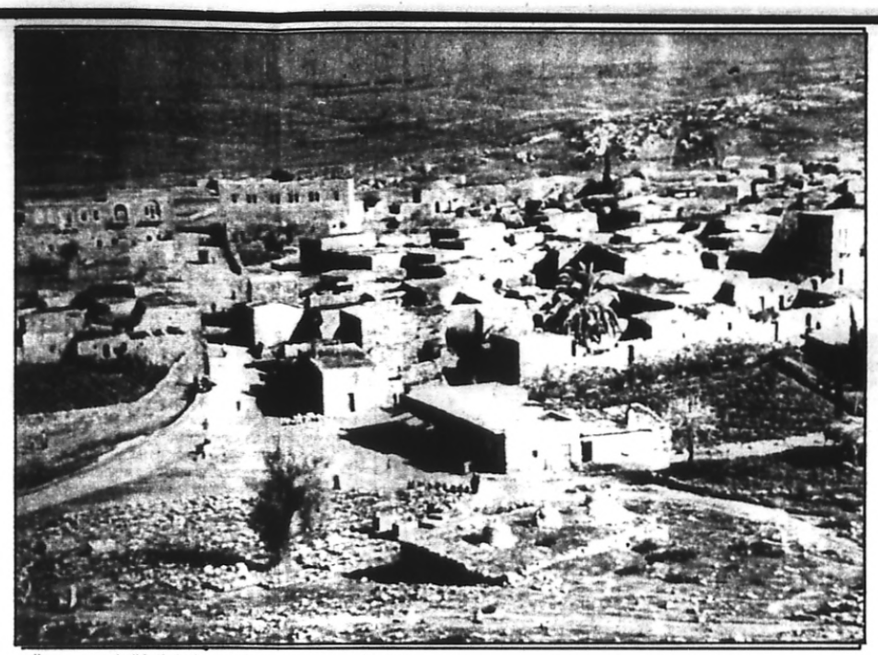
Zakiya Zayid, the wife of the former *mukhtar* of Beit Nubah, remembers: "Some of the people left their homes when they saw the army approaching. The soldiers did not harm any of the civilian residents and even distributed food, candy and cigarettes. Those who did not leave of their own free will were removed by force. The soldiers yelled: 'Go to Hussein! Go to Hussein!' The only thing we were allowed to take with us was our children."

Yossi Muchnik of Kibbutz Nachshon also took part in the operation. He had lived close by for years and knew the villages. He said: "No one even had to knock on the door. All it took was rumour and they left." Amos Kenan was at the time a soldier in the area and later published an eyewitness account: "We were told that our mission was to comb the village. Armed men were to be taken prisoner and those unarmed were to be given enough time to pack up their belongings, after which we were to tell them to proceed to Beit Sira."

So it was that on the morning of June the sixth, nearly 2000 families from the villages of Yalu, Imwas and Beit Nubah found themselves dispersed along the Latrun-Ramallah road. A few of them had been able to pack up some household belongings but the majority only had the shirts on their backs. Those who could lost no time in crossing over to the East Bank. The rest wandered from one village in the region to the next. At a certain stage it seems that a decision was taken to allow the villagers to return to their homes and there was even an announcement calling upon them to do so. But it was rescinded immediately. "At first we went to Beit Lakiya, (a neighbouring village)," says Zakiya Zayid, "but after a few days we wanted to return home. As we approached the village we were stopped by the army and told not to return." Amos Kenan writes: "We were told to stand at the entrance of the village and prevent any of its inhabitants from returning. They had begun to trickle back after hearing our radio broadcast calling on them to return to their homes. We were ordered to fire above their heads and tell them not to enter the village... They told us that they had been evicted from every place in which they sought refuge... and had been wandering along the road for four days with neither food nor water... Some of them had died... We had been ordered to prevent them from seeing how their village was being destroyed."

The destruction of the villages began during the final days of the war. The fourth brigade advanced to Jericho after having conquered the enclave. According to brigade commander Moshe Yotvat, the destruction of the villages was not carried out by the fourth brigade. Yosef Harpaz — who replaced Yotvat after he sustained an injury — concurs. He was ignorant of the destruction of the villages. The operation had been given to the engineering corps, who carried out their assignment with dynamite and bulldozers. Amos Kenan wrote: "The battalion began to grumble. When the villagers saw the bulldozers tearing up the trees they really went into agony. The battalion stayed the night in order to guard the bulldozers but the soldiers had become embittered and most of them wanted to refuse to carry out their orders. In the morning they were transferred out." The order for the destruction of the villages appears to have been made by the commanding officer of the central region, who at the time was Uzi Narkis. Ze'ev (Zunik) Shaham, who commanded the fifth brigade's operations in the Qalqilya-Jenin region, remembers a similar order given in regard to Qalqilya. "The order," he says, "was signed by Uzi Narkis and delivered by his chief of staff." The fact that other villages in the central region were destroyed in the same way seems to point to the fact that the order came from above. Today Narkis is the director of the information department of the Jewish Agency. It took him two days to agree to a meeting but after arriving (late), he would only say, "I don't want to speak about what happened 17 years ago."

Likewise Ze'ev Bloch — who was a member of Kibbutz Nachshon and the regional commander of the area during the war — refused to answer any questions about the episode. One can speculate that the destruction of the villages was part of an earlier plan drawn up before anyone imagined that the border would run 30 kilometres to the east. The destruction of Qalqilya was stopped by order of Moshe Dayan, who, out of foresight, bowed to the pressure exerted upon him after the public became aware of what was going on. Those residents of Qalqilya whose homes had been destroyed were compensated and allowed to rebuild their homes. In a speech delivered at a Technion graduation ceremony in 1973, Dayan said: "The government of Israel has seen to the reconstruction of the villages destroyed during the war and the return of their inhabitants. They include Qalqilya, Hevla, Zitah, Dura, Beit Haweh and Beit Mirsim. Only three villages in the Latrun enclave — Imwas, Beit Nubah and Yalu (with a population of approximately 6000 people) — were not rebuilt. In this case our decision was strictly based on defence evaluations."



At the end of the war the inhabitants of the villages were dispersed throughout the area between Latrun and Ramallah. Some had found refuge with relatives but the majority had to start their lives from scratch. The decision not to rebuild the villages sprang from the forecast that the territories occupied during the course of the war would eventually be returned to Jordan. The Trappist monks offered to settle some of the refugees on the land of their monastery but their offer was rejected. The villagers of Abu Ghosh — many of whom were related to the inhabitants of Imwas — also tried and failed. The Israeli army did not ignore the problem and eventually offered the refugees new lands in the vicinity of Jericho and Ramallah. But the villagers rejected their proposal, both because the land offered was only for construction, and more importantly, because the acceptance of such an offer would have been tantamount to waiving their rights to their villages and renouncing their dream of returning there some day.

The religious settlement of Mavoh Horon was established on the land of Beit Nubah in 1971. Other agricultural lands were divided up among nearby hilltop settlements. Agricultural land was also offered to Kibbutz Nachshon but the kibbutz refused to take it. (One can read the debate over whether or not to agree to the Israeli army request that the kibbutz gather the harvest of the expelled villagers in the kibbutz newsletters of late 1967.) The lands of Imwas and Yalu remained desolate for many years until they were transferred to the Jewish National Fund (JNF) in 1972, which, with the help of donations from Canadian Jews, began to restore the copses and historic sites in the area. Those 4500 dunums are known today as 'Canada Park.'

The story of the destruction of the villages did not receive very much attention in the press. The eyewitness accounts of Amos Kenan and Haim Hanegbi reached *HaOlam HaZeh* before the war was over. According to Uri Avneri [its editor], the army prevented him from visiting the scene and taking pictures of the demolition operation. The censor also forbade the publication of what was going on there in *HaOlam HaZeh*. Amos Kenan's report had to wait two years before it could be published; by that time it had already been widely circulated abroad. In 1981 the whole issue resurfaced when Nahum Barnea published an article in *Davar* but the response was minimal and died out soon after.

The Jewish National Fund — responsible for the upkeep of the park — has removed all signs of the villages and inhabitants from the area. It would seem that only the Canadian donors are worthy of being remembered; their names are engraved in the bronze plaques which cover an entire wall. The reason given for eradicating the near past is that the villages had already been destroyed when the park was first set up. The director of the American desk of the fund claimed that "it is a delicate situation and one cannot expect an institution which gathers money from abroad, such as ours, to publicise this issue." In the glossy hikers' guidebook published by the Jewish National Fund, an entire page is devoted to a historical review of the area; indeed, one may learn all about the battles of Joshua, the Maccabees, Bar Kochba's rebels, the Romans, the Crusaders and the British. The last line reads: "The area was under Jordanian control until the Israeli army liberated it during the six day war."

But a thorough examination of the guidebook reveals nothing about the villages in spite of the fact that their gardens are actually the main attraction of the park. The only clue as to what actually took place occurs in the final paragraph: "Rubble is scattered among the ruins of the houses at the foot of the fortress... In the past, investigators reported finding the ornamental stones of an ancient synagogue and one can speculate about Jews having lived here at that time."

The Ayalon Park pamphlet, published by the Jewish National Fund's Youth and Education Department, devotes 13 pages to the history of the area. Hikers are asked to keep the park tidy, not to light fires, to obey the signs and to protect the flora, fauna and antiquities of the park. But the history of the past century is not mentioned at all.

Both publications were written by Zvi Ilan, an expert on the geography and history of Israel. Ilan also wrote about the area in his book *Seventy-Eight Hikes in Israel*, wherein he does mention the destruction of Yalu: "After the battle of Arsof, Salah al-Din gave an order for the fortress of Yalu to be destroyed in keeping with his 'scorched earth' policy; many other fortresses were destroyed in a similar way..." In a discussion with Zvi Ilan, he claimed that to the best of his knowledge, his original text for the JNF had been much longer than what was published and that certain parts had been removed. "Actually," he added, "those villages did not have any historical, cultural or architectural significance." A day later Ilan said: "As the years go by I've come round to thinking the time has come to remember what happened. In the next edition I'll advise that a section be added."

The Society for the Protection of Nature also publishes guides to the area. One of them — *A Sheet For Teachers* — reads: "The Arab village which was abandoned after the six day war retained the name of one of the major cities of the Roman conquest of Israel." But any pupil whose curiosity is aroused as to where the village has disappeared to will not have his questions answered by reading the instruction sheet distributed by the society. In order to rescue teachers from the embarrassment of such scenes, the society published yet another guide for hikers in cooperation with the ministry of education. "The purpose of this hike," it says, among other things, "is to become familiar with the Ayalon Valley as a historic battleground." In order to keep the more curious pupils occupied, the pamphlet suggests that the teacher pose "five ancient Hebrew riddles which bear on the area." But even the most diligent pupil, once having solved all the riddles, will be no better informed about what happened to the villages.

Left: Imwas (Emmaus) in 1967. By then the fate of the village had already been decided by land-hungry Israeli military strategists. Above: Imwas in 1968. 'Ripped earth' mission accomplished. Below: 'Canada Park' (Imwas) in 1978. 'Official' historical consciousness is so repressed only the villagers know for sure whether the Latrun enclave villages ever existed or not.

In Professor Zvi Vilnay's *Ariel* encyclopedia the caption *Imwas* is accompanied with the following information: "An Arab village which was once located in the Ayalon Valley in the vicinity of Latrun, near the Jerusalem-Ramle road. During battles in this area in the course of the six day war, the inhabitants of the village left their homes and the village decayed. It is now part of the Canada Park." In contrast to his colleagues, Vilnay does not ignore the problem; he simply avoids it. In response to questioning, Vilnay admitted a certain inaccuracy, but said: "Most of the inhabitants fled because they felt guilty about all the trouble they had caused us. Only a few old people stayed and I included them among the fighters who had fled." He went on to say, "I can show you all sorts of books full of nonsense." In answer to the question "Are you the author of any of those books?" Vilnay said: "Forget about Imwas and deal with something positive — like the Jewish settlement of the West Bank. Why poke at old fetid sores? You'll only re-open a old wound."

The same phenomenon recurs in a book entitled *Every Place and Every Site* (published by Carta in cooperation with the ministry of defence). It is apparent that the writer knows the history of the region quite well — at least up to the war of independence. As regards the 1967 war, the author writes that only then was the area conquered. The editor of the book, Baruch Charl, had an original excuse for the historical slight: "The name of the book is *Every Place and Every Site* and we only write about sites that are still standing. If there is no trace of a given site, then we don't write about it." Be that as it may, the writer's visionary powers were adequate for conjuring up the "defeat of Saljuki's army by Yehuda Maccabee."

Avitar Nur, the assistant editor, remembers "that we were embarrassed over this issue. We had a lot of trouble in deciding whether or not to write that the Israeli army had evicted the inhabitants and destroyed their homes. In the end we hinted at it but did not go into particulars." Nur also remembers that the editors decided to censor themselves in consideration of their publishing partners. Both reject the suggestion that they were censored by anyone 'higher up.' Self-censorship appears again and again in books dealing with the area; among them one can list *The Way of the Land*, published by the ministry of defence, and *Beauty Spots*, by Uri Dvir. The only books that give a factual history of the area are *Latrun*, by Arieh Yitzhaki, and the *Israeli Guide*, in which Yitzhaki wrote the relevant section.

Another step in the obliteration of the villages from memory can be seen in their absence from maps. In maps printed after the 1967 war, both the villages and the 'green line' are not to be found. Whoever uses the latest maps of the survey department when they visit the area will not be deceived. The villages really aren't there. (Translation: Kol Ha'ir, August 31, 1984)

Writers Face Occupation and Self-Imposed Restraints

It isn't all Israel's fault

by Bishara Bahbah

Although the percentage of degree-holding Palestinians in the occupied territories compares favourably with most developing countries of the world, very few of those Palestinians have developed the habit of writing on either social, scientific or political affairs. Though not uncommon to developing nations, this lack of professional and critical study by Palestinians is inexcusable and stems from a combination of factors. Some of these factors are beyond the writers' control and can be blamed on the occupation. However, much of the blame rests on the shoulders of Palestinians themselves, for much of what they face is not atypical to other developing nations.

The occupation presents Palestinian writers with a multitude of obstacles that hinder their development as both writers and thinkers, and, at times, prevents the publication of their articles, thus eventually discouraging them from writing. First, there is the issue of Israeli censorship by which all Palestinian publications, newspapers, magazines and books must abide. According to existing Israeli laws, all materials to be published must be reviewed by the Israeli censor prior to publication. The censor has the final say on whether an article, or part of it, appears in a publication or not. Censorship has often cut out some of the best written articles, the most analytical and well-researched. Censorship has been so discouraging to some writers that they have come to the conclusion that writing here is useless.

Al Fajr journalists face this kind of discouragement daily. Much of the original work of an industrious reporter is censored, forcing the paper to print translations from other publications. Often the most thought provoking editorials are totally censored by the authorities, leaving the paper with two columns full of 'apologies.'

Another obstacle put forth by occupation is the extensive banning of books, newspapers, magazines and other research resources from the occupied territories, excluding East Jerusalem. Writers are thus denied access to resource materials essential for writing sound research articles. Writers find themselves travelling to Jerusalem or to Israel proper in quest of a decent library. This usually means a trip to the Israeli universities since the best Arab-owned libraries are those belonging to the various Palestinian universities located in the territories which cannot legally possess those banned books and resources.

Truthfully, not many potential Palestinian writers, be they journalists, intellectuals or political activists, feel comfortable going to Israeli libraries and some of those who would not mind going cannot leave either their hometowns or the occupied territories because of Israeli-imposed travel restrictions on them.

Even those writers who make use of their own university libraries, as limited as they may be, have been denied that use on a number of occasions because of Israeli-imposed closures of those universities. Most recently, Najah, the largest Palestinian university, was ordered shut at the end of July for a four-month period by Israeli authorities. This not only interfered with the academic freedom of thousands of students but also with the freedom of those who wish to use the facilities, including libraries, of those universities. Thus a professor who is least busy at times of university closures cannot reach the library, let alone his own office and files.

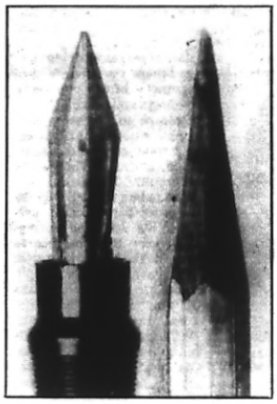
Under normal circumstances, many governments tend to encourage research and writing by providing aid to think tanks and research centres and by guaranteeing freedom of travel and expression. But under conditions of the occupation, none of the above has been forthcoming.

But to lay the blame for Palestinians' lack of enthusiasm for researching and writing at the feet of the Israelis is both damaging and inaccurate. It is damaging because it could provide us with an easy excuse not to write and it is inaccurate because there are many factors besides the occupation that discourage people from writing. Some of these factors involve the Palestinian public, the various publications, the general atmosphere and the writers themselves.

The Palestinian public, although comparatively well educated, has a narrow interpetation of democracy and is relatively intolerant of both new ideas and opposing viewpoints. On the one hand, criticism is acceptable so long as it has nothing to do with the reader. On the other hand, public criticism, particularly of institutions, unions and personalities, is quite often termed 'anti-nationalistic,' given the existence of the occupation. Hence, few have dared to publicly criticise certain institutions for fear of an overall negative reaction and, at times, action. The courageous are often chastised instead of being commended.

Since most peoples' actions are motivated by self-interest, irrespective of whatever good or bad these actions may cause, local writers are no exception. Those who write are often motivated by a number of things, particularly the desire to see their names in print for the sake of either prestige, influence or money. Still, many Palestinian intellectuals and personalities do not see enough advantages in taking the pains to write.

First, they do not see themselves as gaining in prestige from publishing in local publications, some of whose reputations are less than credible. They therefore opt either not to write or to write for a publication abroad. Second, few people have been able to gain much in the way of influence solely from writing in local publications. Many of the writers who do publish here already have the influence and simply use their writing skills to propagate their own political line or thoughts. Third, few local publications have been known to pay an honorarium for those occasional contributors. This honorarium, if paid, regardless of how small, could be viewed as a token of appreciation for those writers and could encourage some of them to write more.



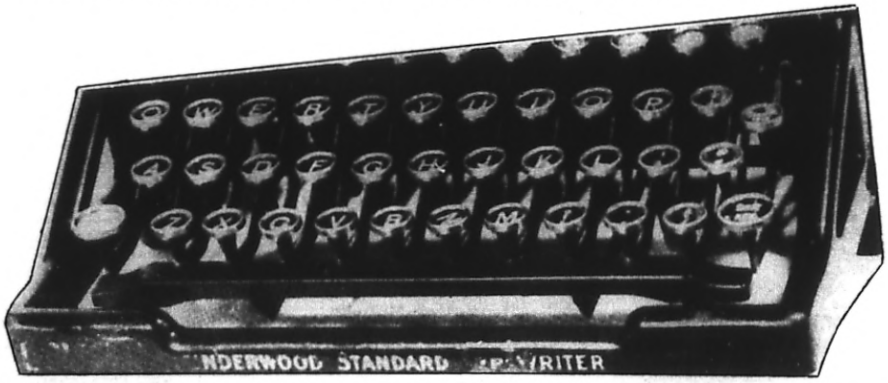
"The limitations imposed by the occupation, although serious, should not blind us to the limitations that we impose on ourselves."

Another important factor that has discouraged many from writing is the publications themselves. Some of these publications are not seen as prestigious enough for a number of potential writers. One particular newspaper owner in Jerusalem has been known to forbid his contributors from writing in other newspapers or else he would no longer publish any of their articles. This close-minded and counter-productive attitude has, in most cases, succeeded in stifling any additional production from these contributors.

However, one cannot only blame the publisher of this particular newspaper but also the weakness of the writers who acquiesce to such pressure. Quite often, writing in a publication notwithstanding the content of the article is viewed as supporting the political line of that publication. This political identification, regardless of the direction in which it leans, is unacceptable to many potential writers and thus discourages some of them from writing at all.

The authors of books, usually the non-political ones, are not only not rewarded for writing a book-length manuscript but they must pay the publication costs from their own pocket because few commercial publishers are willing to take the risk. The universities, which could play a constructive role in publishing a prestigious magazine or journal as well as books, have so far played a minimal role. Besides, few universities have insisted that their faculties publish articles and books as part of their assignments. Very few academics in the territories have, therefore, been involved in research and writing and, more importantly, university administrations lack a system of incentives to reward those faculty members who do write.

Innumerable benefits to society could be reaped from the existence of a store of writers, either as researchers, columnists, investigative reporters or analysts. The limitations imposed by the occupation, although serious, should not blind us to the limitations that we impose on ourselves.



Islamic Museum Exhibits Historic Al-Aqsa Artifacts

by Awad Abdel Fattah

In light of continued attempts by extreme Zionist groups to destroy al-Aqsa Mosque and other Islamic landmarks in Jerusalem, the importance of the Islamic Museum in the al-Aqsa Mosque compound becomes much more crucial than at any time before. It could be said that the motive which generated the decision of the Islamic waqf administration to renovate the neglected museum nine years ago was the arson committed against al-Aqsa in the early years of the Israeli occupation. The fire nearly destroyed the mosque and many Islamic historical objects were burnt as a result.

Realising the real danger posed to the Islamic and Arab landmarks by extremists given free reign by the occupation, as well as the importance of binding the Palestinian young to their civilisation and history, the waqf administration has undertaken the task of developing the museum into a 'school' for disseminating information about aspects of Islamic and Arab culture. Until 1975, the museum was a mere store of historical remains and cultural objects. But in the words of Issam Awad, an archeological member of al-Aqsa's renovation committee, the museum has been "reborn."

The Museum

The Islamic museum is unique in the fact that it not only has survived the dangers of political and cultural upheaval in Palestine over the past six decades but is also the only museum in the area both run by Muslims and dedicated to Islamic history. Often in the broad scholastic field of Islamic studies, students of Islam are caught by the irony that so much of what is written about the faith, particularly in the West, is researched and written by non-Muslims. The museum itself has had to contend with this irony in the form of a competing Israeli-run museum of Islamic history built in West Jerusalem in the late '60's. The Israeli museum, by far superior in wealth and personnel, is often touted as the area's authoritative collection of Islamic concerns, in total disregard for the older and more truly Muslim al-Aqsa museum.

The museum, founded as the area's first museum in 1923 by the Higher Islamic Council, is primarily concerned with the history of Muslims in Palestine. First established in Jerusalem's Old City, the museum was transferred in 1929 to the courtyard of al-Aqsa Mosque and today is under the control of the Islamic *waqf* administration. According to an official of the *waqf*, the museum was orginally begun in order to collect and preserve all presents, donations and other items sent from all parts of the Islamic world to Palestine over the last 12 centuries as well as to store the remnants left over after the many periods of restoration of al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock.

The museum consists of two separate structures both with arched ceilings and thick stone pillars. One of the two was originally a mosque built during the Mameluke period. The second building, quite a bit smaller than the first, was used by the Templars during the Crusader period as a store for weapons and later as a women's mosque before finally being added to the museum.

The Collection

Clearly the most outstanding aspect of the Islamic Museum is its vast collection of Qurans. There are 700 Qurans from various Islamic eras, bearing different styles of calligraphy and ornamentation. They also represent different Islamic schools of art. The oldest Quran dates back to the eighth century and is written on parchment, according to the museum director, Nathmi Ju'beh, whose specialty is archeology. Despite the large number of Qurans in the museum collection, only a few – representative of different periods and bearing unique styles of calligraphy – are shown. One of the rarest Qurans in the museum was handwritten in thirty parts in Moroccan ('Western') calligraphy by the Moroccan King in 1334. At the beginning of each section of the work is an ornamental painting "which is considered the most beautiful and developed that Islamic ornamental art has ever reached," said Ju'beh. According to the director, originally three similar Qurans were written by the same king. Two were sent to Mecca and Medina but the one kept in the Islamic museum is the only one remaining.

In addition to the Quranic collection, the museum contains about 1000 documents dating back to the Mameluke period which appear to be the archives of an unknown institution in Jerusalem in that era. "The significance of these documents," said Ju'beh, "springs from the fact that they reflect the popular history of Jerusalem," in this period. Ju'beh said the documents cover all social and economic aspects of Palestinian life during the time of the Mamelukes. Among the documents are Sultanic decrees, purchase and sale contracts, marriage and divorce certificates, administrative and religious appointments and other items. Ju'beh believes it is one of the best collections of ancient documents in the world, "since these documents are characterised by a specific period of time and geographical place." These documents are now the subject of study by a number of Arab and foreign reseafchers.

Copper pots representing different artistic periods are found in large quantities in the museum. A considerable number of them were originally household utensils. In addition there are various displays of period guns and swords.

A collection of distinctly-decorated candlesticks was donated to al-Aqsa Mosque by Mameluke and Ayyubite sultans in the 12th and 14th centuries. The candlesticks bear gilded Quranic inscriptions, floral ornaments and geometrical designs. Also displayed in a glass case are old Islamic coins which cannot be overlooked. Ju'beh told *Al Fajr* that the museum has more than 1000 Islamic coins which date back to early Islamic periods of the Umayyid, Abbasid and Ottoman empires.

Beautifully ornamented woodwork captures one's attention while walking inside the museum. Most of the woodwork dates back to the Umayyid era and are the wooden beams from al-Aqsa Mosque. They are "the oldest and most beautiful wooden ornaments we have ever seen," said Ju'beh. He noted that this style of art reflects the 'civilisational integration' between the pre-Islamic and post-Islamic periods.

Remnants of Salah al-Din's pulpit, which was burnt in the mosque fire in 1967 set by pro-Israeli arsonists, have been transferred to the museum and are now kept in a glass cupboard. The pulpit, which was placed in al-Aqsa by the Ayyubid leader Salah al-Din in 1187 after he liberated Jerusalem from the Crusaders, is made of cedarwood adorned with ivory and shells.

Among the most important items in the glassworks section is an oil lamp covered in gold and donated by an Ayyubid sultan. The lamp is inscribed with a verse from the Quran and the name of the sultan is written around the neck of the lamp, along with his various titles. The lamp is decorated with floral ornaments and drawings of birds and animals. "This is a very valuable souvenir whose manufacture flourished during the Mameluke epoc in Greater Syria and Egypt and these lamps were lit in mosques in those times," said Ju'beh.

Artistic work with stone also occupies a place in the museum. This is reflected in the ornamental stone columns which were used in the building of the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque. There is also a set of stone ornaments from the decoration of the two mosques, as well as stone inscriptions which reveal the founding dates of a large number of religious and civil institutions in Jerusalem in different Islamic periods up to the 19th century.

The Future in Perspective

In addition to the numerous restraints placed on Palestinian academic and cultural institutions by the Israeli occupation under which it has had to suffer, the Islamic Museum faces a lack of understanding on the part of many Palestinian scholars concerning the importance of a truly Muslim museum of Islamic history. The rest of the world, long embroiled in a study of the East, the 'Orient' and Islam, need only know of the museum's existence to appreciate its original value. The Israelis, on the other hand, understand the importance of an Islamic museum, as evidenced by the building and supporting of their own museum and the authorities' attempts to stifle the growth of the al-Aqsa collection.

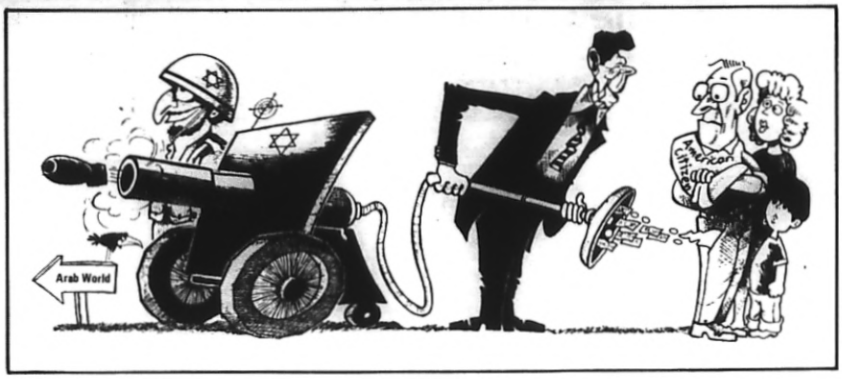
The director of the museum complained that there has been no enrichment to the contents of the museum during the 17 years of the Israeli occupation. "We have not been able to carry out excavations or exchanges with other museums in the Islamic world because of the conditions of the occupation," he said. Palestinians are forbidden by Israeli authorities from participating in archeological digs in their own country and since few Islamic countries in the world recognise Israel, there can be no cultural exchange with these nations.

Issam Awad is proud of what the museum is today. "Whoever saw the museum before 1975 and has seen it now will notice how much work has been done," he said. He added that he does not think the museum can be enriched through excavations because he feels the special character of the collection is based on the fact that most of its objects are remains of the various restoration projects and had been stored in the mosque for a long time.

The lack of financial resources is a major problem facing the museum, according to the director. Because of no money, there has been no modernisation, maintenance or installation of air conditioning to protect the collection.

The museum administration is presently working on indexing the contents in the form of an archive. Also a museum directory is being prepared for print. The director explained that they will continue to develop the museum as their financial capabilities and the occupation allow, "in order to prevent the loss of our culture and civilisation and defeat all Zionist attempts to wipe out our national Palestinian identity."

WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS



The anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacres, the nearing of the PNC session and the forming of the Israeli government were among the top stories in the local press this week.

Palestinian newspapers gave front-page coverage, using photos and editorials, in remembrance of the tragic massacres.

Statement attributed to top PLO officials as to the necessity of convening the PNC were widely covered.

The new Peres-Shamir government was critically covered, with Palestinian newspapers not expecting any new developments on the issue of the occupied territories.

America, Israel and the Arabs

US President Ronald Reagan stressed once more that the US would withdraw from the UN if Israel is dismissed from it. The US would also change Israel's debt status, thus turning about US$1 billion into 'grants' for Israel and Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza.

Once more the Pentagon approved leasing 12 Israeli Kfir fighters to the US sixth fleet for three years. This means the sixth fleet will pay Israel US$68 million during this period. These figures illustrate the unlimited US aid to Israel.

The British paper *The Guardian* criticised this massive US aid to Israel, especially at a time when the US has no influence in Israel at all. The Arab media should have done so also.

How can America reconcile its interests in the Arab countries with its interest in reviving Israel and greater Israel? It is really easy. America's interests in the Arab countries are specifically its interest in supporting Israel's superiority in the region.

America does not forego its debts and withdraw from the UN for the sake of just anybody. America is doing what its aggressive strategy against the peoples of the area dictates.

The Israeli people may discover before it is too late that the wars they waged were not for their slogans only; they were serving American world interests.

Arab peoples should realise also that their defeats were serving American interests. Arab defeats do not mean Israeli victory. It is American victory over the will of the peoples in the region, without exception.

AL FAJR
September 14

Government by Contradiction

After seven weeks of consultations, bargaining, divisions and alliances, Shimon Peres was able to form a government that is hardly free from contradictions. The Labour Party and the Likud are partners in ruling Israel.

Despite the sharp differences between the two parties, they were able to form a national unity government. The final bargains were relatively easy. The Labour Party agreed to give all economic centres to the Likud. By doing so it agreed to share with the Likud the responsibility for the latter's economic faults for the last seven years.

The Labour Party also agreed to enhance settlement in the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan. Thus the Labour Party agreed to consider these areas an integral part of Israel, something which the Labour Party had so far considered an obstacle to peace.

As for Lebanon, it seems that the Likud went along with Labour plans to withdraw from south Lebanon — in other words, saving the Likud and Israeli society from the Lebanese quagmire.

In light of the above, the Israeli elections and the formation of a unity government were the 'lifeboat' that saved the Likud from the economic, political and diplomatic debacles for seven years.

We can see the attitude of Israel during the next stage regarding the occupied territories through the contradicting statements by Shimon Peres. He invited Jordan to the negotiating table and asked Jordan to come up with any proposals for discussion without prior conditions. This is not a bad statement. But in the next sentence, Peres contradicted his invitation when he said, "We shall work for the reinforcement of settling in all the land of Israel."

This eliminates the possibilty of moving away from the stalemate in the area.

Peres knows well that one of the conditions made by King Hussein together with Arab leaders for negotiations is the halt of settlements and the carrying out of UN resolution 242, which stipulates withdrawal of Israel from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967.

Thus we realise that the Peres government will be a transitional government of contradictions awaiting the next elections.

AL QUDS
September 14

Peres Runs to Washington

Hours after the Israeli national unity government won the confidence of the Knesset, it was announced in Washington that Shimon Peres will pay an offical visit to the US. His visit will be followed by similar visits by key Israeli ministers.

These visits, though traditional, are connected with requests for military and economic aid. They are also connected with the US elections in November.

Reagan, who is certain to win, has always talked about US commitment to supporting Israel as a strategic ally. He will generously offer military aid to Peres and will also offer billions of dollars to serve the common interests of both the US and Israel in the region and to win Jewish votes.

There is no way but to solve Arab differences and rally all energies to face the difficult days ahead.

AL SHA'AB
September 15

PNC - Vital for Unity

Reports say that the legitimate leadership of the PLO has been forced to postpone the meeting of the Palestine National Council for another week so that it will be held at the beginning of next month. The reason for this is the official Syrian position, known and unacceptable to all.

After Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Qaddafi signed the artificial union treaty with Morocco's King Hassan, Syrian President Hafez al-Assad went to Algeria and pressured its government and leadership not to host the PNC meeting. This has prompted Algeria to be reluctant in hosting the council meeting, asking for a 'last attempt' to contact Syrian officials and persuade them to change their opposing attitude.

Qaddafi's union deal with Morocco has aimed at isolating the struggle of the Saharan people, Polissario, who Algeria backs. So Algeria became in need of Syria's support and the support of other liberated Arab states.

Syrian President Assad seized the opportunity to press Algeria's leaders to withdraw their former decision to host the PNC. But the Algerians have instead asked for another chance. Leaders of Fatah and the Democratic Alliance have shown understanding towards Algeria's difficult situation.

The expectations of those conspiring against the PLO will be disappointed if they think new difficulties will place the PLO in the margin of history. As long as the Palestinian people are holding on to their homeland and the legitimate leadership of the PLO, the future of the PLO and its leadership is in safety and so is the future of the Palestinians.

It is natural that calls for convening the PNC should increase in order to put an end to the paralysis of the PLO's institutions. This is essential for facing the dangers of the Israeli unity government and the spreading phenomenon of racism in the country.

The convention of the PNC is a main theme in the Aden/Algiers accords and is vital for restoring Palestinian national unity.

AL ITTIHAD
September 17

Sabra and Shatila

When the massacres of Sabra and Shatila, two years ago, turned into a roaring storm in the conscience of the world, the executioners and murderers tried to erase the traces of this massacre and to absorb the wrath of the world's nations by playing with the blood of the innocent old men, women and children.

Despite the failure of these attempts, the fascist Lebanese Phalangists and the Israeli army in Beirut were explicitly condemned. Despite this condemnation, we see now that those condemned stand in the front row of the leaders in their countries. This means that the official authorities in these countries knew in advance about this massacre or at least they approved of it later.

The inquiry commissions and their findings and recommendations were actually absorption committees for the bursting wrath against the executioners and murderers.

What concerns us in this regard is not these commissions and their findings, which have already disapproved of the massacre. Rather, the memory should remain alive with the images of this massacre so that it may not be forgotten and then repeated in other places.

Palestinian blood will never dry out. It will never be obliterated, despite all attempts by various parties. It is an alert and alive blood that will remain until the executioners are punished. Then the victims can rest assured that the future is theirs.

If we insist on observing this anniversary, we will not stand by in mourning and crying. We will continue the march, remembering every drop of blood and remaining faithful to every pledge for the sake of peace and stability for all peoples.

AL FAJR
September 17

Shin Bet Knew of Terror Attacks

The trial of 20 accused members of the Jewish terrorist underground opened September 16 in the Jerusalem district court amidst allegations that the general security services (GSS), known as the Shin Bet, were withholding information about undercover investigations into the terror underground in order to conceal the fact that they had advance knowledge of the underground's intentions. Prior Shin Bet knowledge of the terror activities is crucial to the defence, which seeks to bestow an air of legitimacy to the underground actions.

The defendants — well known as Gush Emunim activists — are charged with conspiring to blow up the mosques on the Temple Mount, car bomb attacks on the West Bank mayors and other prominent Palestinian figures and the attempt to bomb five East Jerusalem buses in the spring of last year. The attack on Hebron University, which left three dead and dozens wounded, will be treated separately, presumably because these charges are more serious and do not involve all of the current defendants.

The trial, parts of which will be held secretly "for reasons of state security," barely got under way before defence lawyers made a preliminary request that at least part of the information gathered by the GSS prior to the arrest of the accused be released. Defence attorney Dani Avi-Yitzhak revealed the existence of a document signed by the minister of defence barring access to information about GSS undercover surveillance of the underground.

"We know now," said Avi-Yitzhak, "that quite a bit of material has been kept from the defence. I'm referring to records of the surveillance, the tapes, the investigations and the interrogations which were carried out before the arrest. For example, we know that surveillance operations were being carried out when the attack on Hebron University was being planned. The GSS knew about the actions that were going to take place. When three of the defendants involved with the bus incident were arrested, they were immediately interrogated on meetings and events which pre-date the attack on the university... With the exception of two memoranda from the day before the arrest, we have not received any of this material. If I may be so bold as to speculate on this matter, it seems to me that the reason for this is that it would not look good if it came out that the GSS was on top of events from the first moment or shortly after." Avi-Yitzhak's statements were reported in the Israeli paper *Yediot Aharanot* September 17.

Avi-Yitzhak went on to claim that "the GSS knew about [the underground's] intention of carrying out an attack on the buses and they also knew about their intention of carrying out an attack on the Hebron University — but they did nothing to prevent it."

Trial judges refused the request to release classified GSS material, stating that they did not have the authority to rule on a certificate of classification. Avi-Yitzhak will now appeal to the High Court for a ruling.

Relations between GSS agents and the accused were overwhelmingly friendly until the trial drew near, according to press reports. *HaAretz* reported September 19: "Relations between GSS interrogators and both the accused and their families were warm and friendly until the trial began to draw near. Just before the trial was about to commence, relations cooled, turning to almost hostile. The accused claim that the change of atmosphere was the result of the many deals made with the GSS in exchange for their confessions."

Despite pre-trial confessions to most of the crimes on the charge sheet, the accused are pleading not guilty. They reportedly hope to wage a political trial whereby they can prove "that certain top political and military figures encouraged the settlers' leadership, well armed and highly integrated into their regions' defence networks, to carry out 'actions that a democratic state cannot do,'" reported *The Jerusalem Post* September 14.

Both police sappers involved in the bus incident were called to the witness stand on the first day of the trial and testified that when they arrived on the scene they were met by GSS agents who tried to prevent them from dismantling the bombs. *The Jerusalem Post* reported September 17: "The agents, saying that there was plenty of time and no danger, asked him to wait for an order from above to dismantle the bombs, Amadi related. The GSS people knew the timers were set for 4:30 pm, although that information could not be gleaned by looking at the charges."

So far, most of the trial has been taken up with testimonies of explosives experts concerning the bombs planted under the East Jerusalem buses. The state prosecutor has also screened a video of arms caches said to belong to the accused. According to the list of weapons on the charge sheets, the caches included everything from smoke grenades to sophisticated bombs.

Throughout the trial the accused have been allowed to roam freely about the courtroom. *Yediot Aharanot* reporter Gabi Baron called it "a family happening" in a report September 18. Outside the courtroom, underground sympathisers have been passing around a petition — which includes the signatures of Israel's two chief rabbis — demanding that police minister Bar Lev allow the defendants to be released for the upcoming religious holidays.

Newspaper reports estimate that over 25 percent of the Israeli public do not consider the underground actions criminal.

Delegation of Liberals Meets Local Figures

British and Canadian Liberals, including British Liberal leader David Steele, met mayors and Palestinian figures from the occupied territories in Jerusalem on the eve of the International Liberals Congress meeting convened in Tel Aviv September 13 — 16. The cessation of settlements construction in the occupied territories and the possibility of convening an international conference attended by all involved parties were among topics discussed between the Liberals and the Palestinian figures at the meeting initiated by the British consul and held in his home.

At the meeting Palestinians were told of the British and Canadian Liberals' refusal to attend the congress if held in Jerusalem. At the Tel Aviv congress convention, Janice Turner of the British Young Liberals spoke of the need to stop harassment of Palestinians in the occupied territories.

Palestinians meeting with the Liberals in Jerusalem included the elected mayors of Gaza, Hebron, Ramallah and Bethlehem. Others included Hatem Abu Ghazzaleh, a former member of the Nablus municipality, Fayez Abu Rahmeh, head of the Gaza Lawyers' Union, and Hanna Siniora, responsible editor of *Al Fajr*. Siniora raised the issue of marketing West Bank and Gaza agricultural products in western Europe.

In a *Jerusalem Post* report September 12 on the congress convention the British Liberal Party members were described as anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic. The report said, "The British Liberals remain at the forefront of a virulently anti-Israel crusade in the [Liberal] International, especially due to the growing influence over British Liberal leader David Steele of Arab lobbyist Lord Mayhew and his pro-PLO faction in the party." The newspaper also accused Steele of "hostility to Israel" for arranging for "King Hussein to invite a delegation of Liberal International leaders to Amman for discussions in the week before the Tel Aviv Congress."

Angered by these accusations, members of the British delegation sent a letter to the editor of *The Jerusalem Post* protesting the report "which presents a travesty of the British Liberal Party." They said that the *Post's* accusation of anti-Semitism is "particularly offensive to those of us in the British delegation who are ourselves Jewish." The letter also said: "The Liberal Party has throughout its history and to the present day been steadfast and loyal to the state of Israel. The Balfour Declaration was itself issued under a Liberal Prime Minister. We are proud of our record of anti-racism in any shape or form."

Authorities Ban Table Tennis Meet

Israeli military authorities in Gaza forbade September 17 the holding of a table tennis singles championship tournament planned for September 21 in the Gaza YMCA.

Major Hassoun, of the Gaza military legislative council, called Salim Sharfa, head of the Palestine Table Tennis Federation, and informed him of the military's decision.

The table tennis championships, which have taken place over the past two years, are conducted between the top 10 table tennis singles players in the West Bank and the top 10 in Gaza.

Sharfa, who has headed the Palestine team since 1964, told *Al Fajr* that the military authorities had also banned the current Palestinian team from travelling to Jordan in August to participate in the Arab table tennis tournament which was held between August 17 and 25 in Amman. The Palestine team is one of the founders of the Arab tournament.

Current table tennis champion Akram al-Eqaili, who returned to Gaza this summer in order to participate in the tournament, had to return to the US where he is studying.

Sharfa, whose last international visit was to the Stockholm championships in April 1967, said he didn't know the reason for the military restrictions. "We have never interfered in politics because politics ruins sports," he said. Sharfa said he can't do anything about the Israeli military restrictions.

Attorney Ruth Gavison, of the Israeli Human Rights Association, told *Al Fajr* that if there were no security problems in connection with the event, then the restriction is "unjustified."

Major Hassoun refused to speak to *Al Fajr* about the restriction and the Gaza spokesperson was unavailable.

Policeman Sentenced for Beating Arab

Police inspector Moshe Biton, 38, was sentenced this week in the Tel Aviv district court after he was found guilty of causing grievous bodily harm to an Arab detainee under interrogation in a cell at the Fara'a prison. Biton was sentenced to four months in prison and eight months probation but Judge Victoria Ostrovsky-Cohen postponed the enactment of the sentence until Biton's lawyer appeals to the High Court.

Walid Mahmoud Eh'arda, an Arab teacher, was arrested on suspicion of participating in a demonstration and incitement. According to the charge sheet, Biton beat him during his interrogation. He was beaten all over his body and stripped. Biton then poured water on him and made threats. According to the teacher's testimony, Biton tied a copper wire around his ear, stringing it through his pants. "All of a sudden I felt an electric shock all over my body and I felt like I was being torn apart," said Eh'arda.

Attorney Avraham Feingold, lawyer for the accused, called Biton's commanding officer to the witness stand. He described the poor conditions, the tension and the dangers rampant in prisons in the occupied territories. When she passed sentence, Judge Ostrovsky-Cohen said that poor work conditions are no excuse for Biton's behaviour. "He beat a citizen ignoring the faith his superior officer had placed in him," she said. (Translation: Hadashot, September 19, 1984)

PRESS

continued from page 1

Sources close to the Israeli ministry of defence lodged their protest of the warnings September 18, not out of sympathy with PPS but because the interior ministry had made its decision without prior consultation with the defence ministry. A spokesperson from the office of the Israeli prime minister said, "The prime minister was surprised by the decision." Israeli newspapers reported that the decision was based on reports made by Israeli intelligence.

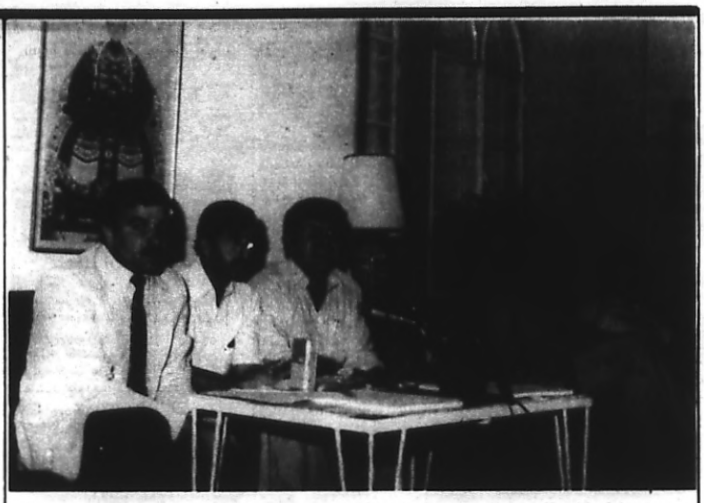
Palestinian nationalists condemned the decision and considered it to be against the traditional freedom of expression. Bassam Shaka'a, the elected mayor of Nablus, said the decision is part of a comprehensive plan to destroy national institutions. Raymonda Tawil expressed surprise that the decision took place only a few days after the Alignment took power in the new government.

Bir Zeit University
Arabic for Beginners

A course in written Arabic for beginners will be offered by Bir Zeit University beginning Monday, October 8, 1984. The course lasts for one semester, ending mid-February 1985. Classes meet twice a week, Monday and Thursday, from 4:00—5:15 p.m.

Titution fees: 30 Jordanian Dinars for the course. Application forms obtained from the Registrar's Office on the New Campus should be returned to the same office by September 27, 1984.

WEEKLY REVIEW



A press conference on the Najah closure was held at the American Colony Hotel in Jerusalem. From left to right are Nabil Abu Znaid, of the Employees Union in Najah, Adnan Sh'qair of the BU Employees Union, and Hanna Hallaq, head of the BU Employees Union. /AO Photo.

September 12, 1984

HEAD OF UM AL-FAHM RECEIVES KACH THREATS

UM AL-FAHM — The Um al-Fahm local council chairperson Hashem Mahamid has received a letter threatening him with murder, signed: "Your doctor from the Kach movement." The letter contained verbal abuses both in Arabic and Hebrew such as: "Dirty Arab, dirty dog, big shepherd dog." A golden Nazi swastika was painted on the letter.

The Kach movement, led by the US-born racist Rabbi Meir Kahane, has long been leading a campaign to drive the Arab residents in Israel and the occupied territories out of their homeland.

OPEN LETTER DETAILS PRISON CONDITIONS

Mothers and relatives of Palestinian detainees in Israeli prisons sent an open letter Wednesday to international institutions, Arab MKs, lawyers' unions and all those advocating human rights explaining the harsh conditions and ill treatment inside Israeli prisons.

The letter listed the names of several detainees who are suffering from various diseases as a result of inhumane conditions in Israeli prisons.

JORDANIAN AUTHORITIES ARREST MUNICIPALITY MEMBER

Dr Faisal Awdeh, member of the elected Jericho municipality, was detained by Jordanian authorities while visiting Amman two weeks ago.

JORDANIANS RELEASE PFLP MEMBER

Hamdi Mattar, member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) political office, was released yesterday by Jordanian authorities after being detained for 20 months, said informed sources in Amman. Mattar is also a member of the Palestine National Council.

U.S CONSUL VISITS POLYTECHNIC

HEBRON — The US consul general visted the Hebron Polytechnic College yesterday and received a briefing from the president of the college, Mahmoud Qawasmeh, on the developing stages of the college.

September 13, 1984

MILITARY VEHICLE STONED

AL-BIREH— An Israeli military vehicle was stoned while passing through al-Bireh. Three soldiers left the vehicle and began searching for the stone-throwers.

BUS STONED

JALAZON — Students from Jalazon refugee camp threw stones at an Israeli bus and smashed its windows.

RESIDENT'S BODY FOUND

JALBOUN — The body of Abd al-Fatah Abd al-Aziz Hassan Abrouz of the village of Jalboun was found yesterday near the village. Rumours said the youth was killed when a tractor he was driving overturned.

GIRL'S BODY FOUND IN POOL

A 16-year-old girl's body was found in one of Solomon's Pools in the Khadr area.

The girl, a resident of Bethlehem, has been missing from her home for two days.

YOUTH SENTENCED

Ali Abd al-Karim Issa, of the Jalazon refugee camp near Ramallah, was sentenced by the Nablus military court to five months suspension. He was charged with setting up roadblocks on the street.

UNIONIST UNDER TOWN ARREST

Unionist Ali Abu Hilal of Abu Dis has been placed under town arrest in his hometown. He was detained for 18 days on charges of practising union activities and was released last Sunday.

RAMALLAH'S PROBLEMS DISCUSSED

RAMALLAH — A meeting was held in the Ramallah Chamber of Commerce between CC officials, the Ramallah military governor and the city's director of income tax to discuss demands of residents and merchants. Ibrahim al-Far, head of the Ramallah Chamber of Commerce, said officials promised to reply to all the demands introduced.

NO TRAVEL PERMITS FOR WEST BANK

West Bank residents are continuing to suffer from the lack of travel permits to Jordan. Many post office officials have seized the opportunity to sell the permits on the black market for high rates.

YOUTH RELEASED

Israeli authorities released Mu'in al-Kasroumeh after he served an 18-month sentence in Nablus prison. The authorities also released Hassan al-Shahrouri after he was detained for 40 days at Fara'a prison.

September 14, 1984

MAYORS SPEAK OUT ON NEW UNITY GOVERNMENT

There is negative reaction on the part of some West Bank political leaders to the newly born Israeli bi-partisan government headed by Shimon Peres.

Deposed Mayor of Ramallah Karim Khalaf said there is not much difference now between Israel's main rival blocs. "Both Labour and Likud are seeking to increase the number of settlements in the occupied territories and one cannot expect from them a positive change toward the Palestinians," he added.

Mustafa al-Natsheh, the deposed acting mayor of Hebron, expressed a similar view saying the new Israeli government "will not be able to undertake new peace initiatives in the Middle East because of its weakness and therefore the Palestinians' fate will remain unchanged."

Rashid Shawwa, the deposed mayor of Gaza, called on Egypt and Syria to "bear their responsibility in the occupied territories." He said, "I would like to remind Peres of his promise before the elections to revive the peace process in the Middle East and put an end to settlement operations in the occupied territories."

SABRA AND SHATILA ANNIVERSARY IN LONDON

LONDON — The Palestinian Coordinating Committee in London marked the second anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacres in a meeting in the centre of London. The PLO representative in London delivered a speech on this occasion.

TULKARM MUNICIPALITY TO RESUME WORK

TULKARM — The Tulkarm municipality council has decided to cancel its 1981 decision to suspend its activities following the dismissal of a number of Arab mayors, Israel Radio reported Friday.

UM AL-FAHM YOUTHS RELEASED ON BAIL

HADERA — The Israeli magistrates court in Hadera yesterday ordered the release of eight youths from the village of Um al-Fahm who were detained two weeks ago during a demonstration in the village to protest MK Meir Kahane's attempt to enter Um al-Fahm.

The eight youths were released on a bail of IS100,000 each. The following youths were released: Mohammed Salameh, Zaher Jabarin, Khaled Mahamid, Mas'oud Jabarin, Rafik Jabarin, Faris Mahajneh and Hani Abyah.

PALESTINIAN PRISONER ILL IN RAMLE PRISON

RAMLE — Palestinian political prisoner Rajeh Bashr, who is serving a life sentence in Ramle prison, is suffering from diabetes and high blood pressure, *Al Fajr* has learned.

He was transferred to Damoun prison after he had threatened to go on a hunger strike because he was not being given the proper treatment for his illness.

ONE KILLED, TWO WOUNDED IN BRAWL

JENIN — Fawzi Sha'ban Ghazawi, 33, a resident of Jenin refugee camp, was stabbed to death last night in a brawl which involved several youths from the camp.

Two other persons,

A popular conference was held in Beit Hanina by Women's Committees in the West Bank September 14, in solidarity with Palestinian prisoners. /MN Photo.

A monument in memory of the Sabra and Shatila martyrs was erected in 1982 in the Naqab.

Mohammed Sha'ban Ghazawi and Ahmad Issa al-Ghoul, were seriously wounded in the melee and taken to hospital for treatment.

BULLDOZERS PAVE WAY

Israeli bulldozers have begun work to pave a road on land between the villages of Raba and Talfit in the Jenin district. The road is expected to reach the Jordan Valley.

LABOURERS' PROBLEMS REVIEWED

The West Bank Federation of Labour Unions held a meeting with a visiting Norwegian labourers' delegation. Both sides reviewed the problems faced by labourers in the Israeli-occupied territories and cooperation between the two unions.

September 15, 1984

UNIONS DEMAND RAISE

NABLUS — The administrative board of the Municipal Institutional Workers' Union decided to demand employers raise salaries, set up health care committees and allow workers to join respective unions.

BEIT JALA REFUSES TO ISSUE PERMITS

BEIT JALA — The Beit Jala municipality has refused to issue building permits to residents whose land plot is less than one dunum. Landowners are also not allowed to build on more than 15 percent of their property holdings.

LAWYER SAYS DON'T PROSECUTE CLIENT

Lawyers for Younis Tayem, from Thahriyeh village, have asked the military legal advisor not to allow the prosecutor to try her client for violating his town arrest order. Tayem's lawyer, Felicia Langer, said the Geneva Convention states that occupying powers are responsible for guaranteeing livelihoods for occupied residents and that Tayem broke his town arrest in order to make a living.

September 16, 1984

KAHANE'S FOLLOWERS PROVOKE ARABS IN OLD CITY

JERUSALEM — Members of the racist Kach movement led by Rabbi Meir Kahane attacked Arab residents in the Wad quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. Arab youths responded by throwing stones at the attackers. Kahane's followers then broke into one of the Arab houses and arrested a 13-year-old child. The boy was later released.

ABORTED ATTEMPT TO FORCE RESIDENT TO SELL LAND

KARAWAT BANI HASSAN — Unidentified persons bearing documents for land sale broke into the home of Ma'rouf Abdullah Rayan Saturday night in the village of Karawat Bani Hassan and tried to force the owner of the house to sell them his land. They escaped after family members began shouting for help and neighbours rushed to their aid. The persons left behind a knife, sleeping pills and their papers.

Rayan had complained that some people have been trying to tempt him into selling his land.

YOUTH GETS 5 YEARS FOR MEMBERSHIP

RAMALLAH — The military court in Ramallah sentenced Mohammed Isma'il al-Dik from the village of Ta'amreh in the Bethlehem district to two-and-a-half years in prison plus another two-and-a-half years suspended on charges of membership in an illegal organisation.

STUDENT SENTENCED FOR DEMONSTRATING

NABLUS — Diab Abed, a student at the Kalandia Vocational Centre, was sentenced by the Nablus military court to 75 days in prison and seven months suspended plus a IS35,000 fine on charges of participating in a demonstration and throwing stones at an Israeli soldier.

2 JENIN YOUTHS IMPRISONED

NABLUS — The Nablus military court sentenced Abd al-Razek Ahmad Jaradat, from Seilet al-Harthiyeh, to five months imprisonment on charges of throwing a Molotov cocktail at an Israeli patrol and painting graffiti on walls.

The court also sentenced Zakariya Afif Abdullah Zakarneh, of Jenin, to five months imprisonment and five months suspended on charges of throwing stones at Israeli cars.

ISRAELI BUS STONED

JALAZON — An Israeli bus was stoned yesterday while it passed near Jalazon refugee camp in the Ramallah district, Israeli military sources reported. Sources said the windows of the bus were broken but made no mention of injuries.

PATIENTS COMPLAIN OF LACK OF MEDICINE

NABLUS — The lives of patients suffering from heart disease in Nablus are at stake because of the continuous lack of medicine in the city. The patients also complained that the medicine was too expensive.

September 17, 1984

AUTHORITIES FOIL ESCAPE ATTEMPT

GAZA — Israeli authorities and police have foiled an attempt to escape from Gaza prison. A number of prisoners had succeeded in removing some bricks from the prison wall, opening a hole for a night escape. An Israeli warden, however, discovered the hole and informed the prison authorities.

MUSLIM LEADER STANDS TRIAL

GAZA — Israeli military authorities have detained a Muslim *Imam* suspected of being the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Gaza Strip.

Israel Radio reported that *Sheikh* Ahmad Yassin; 53, is being held with 20 of his followers and being questioned about anti-Israeli activity.

Sheikh Yassin was charged Monday by the Gaza military court with setting up an Islamic organisation aimed at destroying Israel and replacing it with an Islamic state. He was also charged with weapons possession and conspiracy.

Also charged were Dr Mohammed Abd al-Rahman Shehab, head of the Islamic Association in Jabalya, Abd al-Rahman Temraz, Mohammed Samara and Mohammed Arab.

YOUTH GETS 8 YEARS FOR MEMBERSHIP

RAMALLAH — The Ramallah military court Monday sentenced Izat Mohammed Hussein Badwan, from the village of Kobar in the Ramallah district, to four years in prison plus four years suspended on charges of membership in an illegal organisation and possessing explosives.

STUDENT STILL HELD

Georgette Rishmawi, a student at the Hebron University, is still being held by Israeli authorities. She was detained 40 days ago.

September 18, 1984

POLICE CHIEF'S CAR STONED

DHEISHEH — A car carrying the Hebron police chief was stoned as it passed near Dheisheh refugee camp Monday morning the Israeli daily *Yediot Aharanot* reported. The paper said four other cars were stoned on the same day and had their car windows broken. There were no casualties.

PRISONERS DEPORTED TO JORDAN

Sheikh Yousef Billo and Elias Takatka, both from the village of Beit Fajjar in the Bethlehem district, were deported to Jordan after serving a 15-year prison sentence in Israeli prisons on charges of membership in an illegal organisation.

PALESTINIAN FLAG IN NABLUS

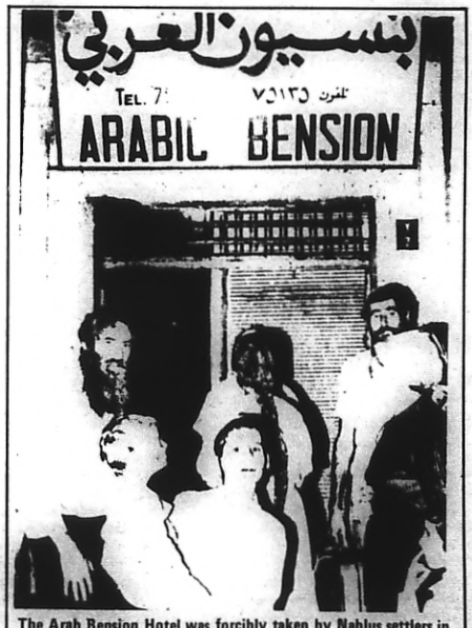
NABLUS-- A large Palestinian flag estimated at 20 metres wide was raised on the top of Mount Ebal in Nablus yesterday morning. Israeli security forces removed the flag.

BETHLEHEM UNIVERSITY STARTS TODAY

BETHLEHEM — The 1984/85 academic year will open today at Bethlehem University following the conclusion of the summer holiday. 1500 students will be studying in the university this year.

STUDENTS ARRESTED FOR OBSERVING ANNIVERSARY

'AR'ARAH — Israeli police raided the secondary school in the village of 'Ar'arah in the Triangle area Tuesday and arrested a number of students who were commemorating the second anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacres.



The Arab Bension Hotel was forcibly taken by Nablus settlers in an attempt to settle in the heart of the city.

The slaughter may be over, but the memory remains

Sabra and Shatila: Two Years Later

by Maher Abukhater

"That evening, people began to cry: 'They are slaughtering them, they are slaughtering them!' We began to believe it when they started bringing in the wounded, with bullet wounds shot from close range."

Two years ago this week Palestinian refugees in west Beirut were living moments of horror as word spread that a massacre was being perpetrated against them at Sabra and Shatila camps. For 36 straight hours, right-wing Lebanese terrorists and possibly Israeli soldiers went on a rampage in the two Palestinian camps slaughtering every Palestinian in sight regardless of sex or age. By the time the massacre was over and the whole world began to hear of it, the death toll was estimated in the thousands, most of them unarmed and frightened Palestinian women, children and old men.

Two years later, press reports from the two afflicted refugee camps indicate that the fear and uncertainty following the departure of Palestinian fighters from Beirut on August 31, 1982, leaving almost 250,000 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon without protection and under the mercy of a relatively hostile government and army, is of a lesser extent. West Beirut is presently under the control of the one-time allies of the Palestinian revolution, the Shi'ite Amal militias, who liberated it from Lebanese army hands last year and took

Indicted Israælis Hold Key Positions in New Unity Government

it upon themselves to protect the camps, which also shelter deprived Lebanese Shi'ites who fled from southern Lebanon during and before the June 6, 1982 Israeli invasion.

However, in spite of the protection, uncertainty of the future is still prevalent as Lebanese officials continue to talk about 'finding a solution' to the issue of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. According to Lebanese calculations, only 100,000 refugees can stay on Lebanes soil, as agreed by the Arab League, while the other 150,000 should be sent somewhere else. As a result, many Palestinians fear that more massacres may be committed against them in order to drive them out of the country, a tactic which Israel used during its first war with the Arabs in 1947-48. Lebanese Phalange members were quoted in the press as making a comparison between the Sabra and Shatila massacre and the massacre in Deir Yassin committed by Jewish terrorists under the leadership of once-Premier of Israel Menachem Begin in 1948. Pierre Yazbek, who heads a Phalangist office in Jerusalem, tried to justify in a press interview the massacre of the Palestinians in Lebanon by comparing it to Jewish acts in Palestine in 1947-48 which resulted in spreading terror among the Palestinians and ultimately led to their mass exile from their homes.

PLO Leader Yasir Arafat disclosed early this week that the PLO has received reports of a new massacre being planned for the Palestinian refugee camps of Ein al-Hilweh and Mieh Mieh. Arafat said the massacre is planned for immediately following an Israeli withdrawal from Sidon.

In Israel, officials who were indicted by a special Israeli commission of inquiry into the Beirut massacres are back into the country's political life, with the exception of former Premier Begin who had to quit not out of remorse for the murder of innocent civilians in Sabra and Shatila but in depression over the death of his wife. Defence minister during the invasion of Lebanon Ariel Sharon, who, along with his chief of staff Rafael Eitan, was held by the Kahan Commission responsible for allowing bloodthirsty Phalangists into the camps knowing that there might be a massacre committed as a result. Sharon is now minister of trade and industry in the new national unity government after he was forced, due to public pressure, to resign his defence post in February of last year. He is also a member of the more-powerful condensed cabinet. Eitan, who was allowed to remain in his post until his official retirement, is now leader of the ultra-right wing Tsomet party and second in command in the Tsomet-Tehiya coalition. He was also elected to a parliamentary seat in the recent elections. Eitan is known for his anti-Palestinian remarks and has been condemned in the past for personally murdering civilians and throwing them in a well in southern Lebanon.

Yitzhak Shamir, who knew about the massacres but dismissed the reports as unimportant, succeeded Begin as prime minister until his party failed to get majority seats in the last national elections and had to hand the government over to his opponent, Shimon Peres of the Labour Party. Shamir is currently foreign minister and vice premier in the new cabinet. He will get his premiership post back in two years according to the agreement reached between him and Labour to form a national unity government. Amir Drori, former commander of the Israeli forces in Lebanon, has been promised a high-ranking job in the army as soon as he returns from the United States where he is pursuing his education.

The Kahan Commission report, which was released in February 1983, held the Israeli officials as "indirectly" responsible for the massacre because they "failed" to prevent it from happening — this in spite of eyewitness testimonies that the Israeli army fired flares over the camps to illuminate the area when the massacre was underway. Eyewitnesses also said the Israeli army, which had checkpoints on roads leading to the camps, did not prevent the Phalangist forces from crossing its lines and even allowed them to take bulldozers with them which were used to demolish homes on top of residents and to bury hundreds of bodies before their crime was exposed.

A Lebanese 'inquiry' into the massacre did not reveal anything of substance and was satisfied with only blaming Israel for it since the Israeli army was in control of the city during the massacre. The one-man inquiry team did not name anyone and never made any recommendations regarding those responsible for it. The Phalange Party is still in control of the Lebanese government and so far no one has been arrested or charged with the murders. An international commission set up to investigate the massacre also blamed Lebanon and Israel for it and urged bringing to trial all those responsible for it.

The recent US veto in the UN cancelling a resolution classifying southern Lebanon as 'occupied territory,' and therefore under the protection of the Geneva Convention, has caused many to fear that new massacres are indeed possible in an area so vulnerable and unprotected. It was the withdrawal of the American-dominated multi-national force which took place three weeks before the agreed date that left the camps open to the horrors of Sabra and Shatila. It could be the US veto which once again leaves Palestinian refugees open to new slaughter and attack.

Memories of the massacres are still vivid in the minds of Palestinians everywhere. In Beirut, Palestinian refugees in Sabra and Shatila who survived the massacre visited the mass graves to pay tribute to their dead relatives and friends. They also observed a day-long strike September 16. In the Israeli-occupied southern region of Lebanon, Palestinian refugees demonstrated against the occupation and the massacre. Several Palestinians in southern Lebanon have been murdered over the past two years by right-wing Lebanese terrorists armed, trained and financed by the Israeli army. Many others have been continuously terrorised and detained by Israeli soldiers and their Lebanese surrogates.

Refugee camps and Palestinian strongholds in northern and eastern

"We will not forget or forgive."

Lebanon are still targets for Israeli warplanes. Even though Israel claims that its invasion of Lebanon was successful and that it 'eradicated' the Palestinian military wing, it nevertheless is still attacking refugee camps and Palestinian areas in Lebanon as was the case before it invaded south Lebanon. Palestinians fear the continued attacks are intended to eliminate them as a people and to push them out of Lebanon.

In the occupied West Bank, the second anniversary of Sabra and Shatila was remembered with protests in refugee camps and the stoning of Israeli vehicles. In one incident, shots were fired at an Israeli bus carrying settlers to Kiryat Arba settlement near Hebron as the bus was driving on the main Jerusalem-Hebron road. Five Israeli settlers were injured in the attack. Dheisheh camp and nearby al-Khader village, sites near the attack, were placed under curfew as Israeli soldiers combed the area in search of the attackers. Dheisheh camp, as well as Jalazon and Am'ari refugee camps near Ramallah, were previously sites of rock attacks on Israeli vehicles passing on the roads in front of them.

Palestinian newspapers in the occupied territories commemorated the anniversary of the massacre with editorials, columns, photographs and headlines reading: "We will not forget or forgive."